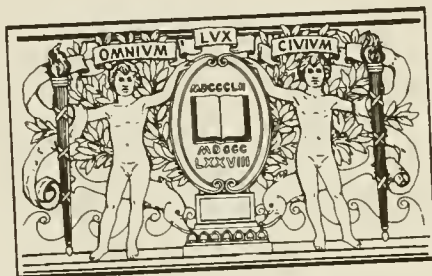


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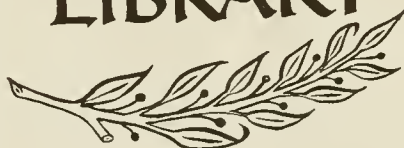
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**BACK BAY  
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# BACK BAY DEVELOPMENT PLAN 1967



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# **BACK BAY DEVELOPMENT PLAN**

**Prepared for  
THE BOSTON REDEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY  
AND THE BACK BAY PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION**

**By  
Adams, Howard and Oppermann  
Planning Consultants — Cambridge, Massachusetts  
July 1967**



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- Report B    by Wilhelm von Moltke, Chapman & Goyette - "Recommendations on Design & Sign Controls"
- Report C    Mason & Frey - "Commonwealth Avenue Landscaping"
- Report D    Mason & Frey - "Boylston Street Promenade"
- Report E    Bok - "Zoning Recommendations"
- Report F    James D. Landauer Assoc. - "Land Use and Marketability Report"







## BACK BAY DEVELOPMENT PLAN

### FOREWORD

This document presents a proposed ten-year Development Plan for the Back Bay. It is the product of collaboration between the Back Bay Planning and Development Corporation, representing the various established interests within the area, and the Boston Redevelopment Authority as the City's planning arm. It reflects two years of joint effort of the staffs of these two agencies and a team of the following specialist consultants:

General Planning - Adams, Howard & Oppermann, Cambridge

Architecture and Design - Wilhelm von Moltke; Chapman & Goyette, Cambridge

Traffic and Parking - Barton-Aschman Associates, Inc.,

Chicago; Michael A. Powills, Jr., Principal Associate

Real Estate and Market - James D. Landauer Associates,  
New York, John R. White, Vice President

Zoning - John Bok, Boston

Sub-Soil and Structural Engineering - Le Messurier Associates,  
Inc., Boston

Rehabilitation - Industrial Estimating Service, Boston

Landscape Architecture - Mason & Frey, Cambridge

The detailed studies of these consultants are the foundations for this summary report.



Since the early 1960's, the Boston Redevelopment Authority has conducted special studies of the older parts of the city to determine specific programs of urban renewal to be carried out in each section. Usually, the first step in each area was the preparation of a general neighborhood renewal plan which led to specific recommendations for urban renewal projects.

The Boston Redevelopment Authority completed a general neighborhood renewal plan for the Back Bay early in 1965, but it contained no recommendations for new urban renewal projects. While it is true that certain sections of the Back Bay are included in the Central Business District Renewal Project, the South Cove Renewal Project, the South End Renewal Project, and the Fenway Renewal Project, for the most part the Back Bay neither requires nor is eligible for urban renewal project treatment with state or federal subsidy.

Nevertheless, the general neighborhood renewal plan did disclose a variety of urgent problems and the need for systematic improvement programs within the Back Bay. At this point, Edward Logue, Development Administrator of BRA, recommended that the Back Bay leaders form a private planning and development corporation for the purpose of preparing development guidelines for the district, and he suggested that the BRA, in its capacity as city planning agency, would cooperate.



Responding to the proposal of Mr. Logue, the Back Bay leadership created and financed the Back Bay Planning and Development Corporation as the instrument for research planning and development proposals for the Back Bay. Simultaneously, they created the Back Bay Council, a carefully structured and carefully proportioned civic body representing each of the interest groups and established civic agencies in the Back Bay.

The principal proposals developed by the Planning Corporation, the BRA, and their consultants are summarized in this report and have already been given general approval by the Back Bay Council.

This is not to suggest that every comment in this report has been approved by each of the Council members, nor to suggest that the planning process has come to a final and absolute completion. General proposals and policies must be tested, applied, and in some cases revised and adopted to changing circumstances and new opportunities. Further study is needed on certain complex issues. The planning process is dynamic and continuous.

It should be clear from the above that the people and the organizations of the Back Bay have, in a most dramatic fashion, established the machinery both to plan and to implement planning for the future growth and welfare of their district.



## BACK BAY DEVELOPMENT PLAN

### INTRODUCTION AND SUMMARY

Since its beginnings a century ago, the Back Bay has been one of the most significant and influential neighborhoods of the Boston Metropolitan Area.

The design of its residential streets; the inspired landscaping of the Public Garden, Esplanade and Commonwealth Avenue Mall as well as of private spaces; distinguished buildings such as the Boston Public Library at Copley Square; these mark the Back Bay as one of the most handsome urban neighborhoods of the world. It is a testimony to what man can accomplish in the art of city building.

Despite its historic grandeur, there has never been a serious suggestion that the area should be retired as a museum or tourist attraction. Instead, it has successfully adapted to the requirements of one generation after another, and today shows great vitality as a most prosperous section of the City.

The Back Bay has provided fertile ground for the creation of many great institutions. Some of them have left in search of expansion space, but some remain in the area and others are today





located nearby, giving the Back Bay the unique characteristics of an integrated residential and institutional district.

The commercial life of the Back Bay which began near the turn of the Century has produced the exceptional Newbury-Boylston Street shopping area which is the specialty retail district of Greater Boston.

For several decades, there has been impressive growth in office development, climaxed by the building of Prudential Center, which was the critical reaffirmation of Boston's value as a great commercial city and which put in full swing the rebuilding in the central city of what is known as "The New Boston".

The great hotels of the city cluster in Back Bay, and it has become the convention and visitors' center of the Metropolitan Area.

#### Current Problems

Despite its extraordinary ability to adapt and grow, the Back Bay today faces an accumulation of many serious problems. Some are the result of old age, building obsolescence, and faulty conversions; some are growing pains - traffic congestion, parking shortage, garish commercialism; many, such as obsolete transit, are



common to other sections of the metropolis; but some Back Bay problems, such as those caused by the extraordinary inundation by students, are relatively unique.

It is obvious that a sustained community effort must be made to alleviate these problems so that the Back Bay can grow to its full potential. In other words, a development plan for the area is a prime requisite to future well-being.

#### Importance of the Area

The condition of the Back Bay is a matter of importance to the entire metropolitan population - not only because of the area's distinctive role in our heritage, but because it is a vital part of the Boston economy.

If business growth and employment gains are to be achieved in Boston, the Back Bay must provide the space and the services to accommodate much of this future growth.

If Boston is to continue to attract middle and upper income families to live within its boundaries and to play an active role in the life of the city, the Back Bay must provide suitable accommodation within an attractive living environment.



If Boston is to provide an adequate level of public services across the city, then it must continually depend upon an enlarging surplus of tax income from the historically favored and central districts such as the Back Bay.

Thus, the Metropolitan Area and the City have very much at stake in the renewal of the Back Bay and there are imperative reasons for the public efforts and public investments required to sustain this area.

#### The Development Plan

The Development Plan, based upon a forecast of social, economic and physical changes which may reasonably be expected in the Back Bay over the next decade, consists of recommendations for public policy, community action and private action to channel the forces of change in the manner most appropriate to the solution of area problems and to the achievement of the optimum potential growth for the area.

The forecasts and recommendations are based on inventories of the area, analyses of the problems, and a recognition of the Back Bay's very special personality, as an integrated residential-business-institutional district in the center of Metropolitan Boston.



The Highlights of the Back Bay Development Plan: 1967-1977

1. Copley Square: To be renewed as the visual and social focus of Back Bay through:

- the reconstruction of Copley Square to a new design;
- the enhancement of four landmark buildings: Boston Public Library; Old South Church; Trinity Church; and the Sheraton-Plaza Hotel;
- new night lighting in and around the Square;
- creation of the Dartmouth Street Mall connecting the Square to the Charles River;
- construction of new buildings in the Copley Square area, e.g., Boston Public Library Addition; the proposed John Hancock Development; and new apartment and office buildings on the north side of the Square;
- enactment of protective zoning and possibly an architectural control zone around the Square;
- a modernized Copley Square subway station and improved transit services.

2. Boylston Street and Newbury Street: To continue as Boston's finest shopping streets with significant new growth and emphasis on pedestrian amenities and architectural improvement. Changes will include:

- dramatic retail growth - 120,000 sq. ft. of new retail





space; 350,000 sq. ft. of modernized retail space; and 250,000 sq. ft. of new retail space to open at Prudential Center; and new residential and office construction:

- architectural controls for Newbury Street, and sign controls for the entire area;
- new landscaping program for Boylston Street to produce arcades and mall effects; new trees, lights, plantings, sidewalks;
- vastly improved transit services, with Arlington and Auditorium Stations (as well as Copley) to be modernized;
- addition of 900 parking spaces for shoppers, plus expansion of Prudential parking facilities;
- possible Minibus loop service on Boylston and Newbury Streets;
- new motor hotel near the Auditorium.

3. Stuart and St. James Area: To continue as a major growth area for office and related uses with:

- over 2 million sq. ft. of office space to be constructed as expansion by present firms;
- construction of a transportation center on air rights between Clarendon and Dartmouth Streets, to include a new M.B.T.A. station on the relocated southwest rapid transit line; connection to high-speed railroad service;



- a major parking facility; and a possible bus terminal;
- future development of the air rights west of Dartmouth Street for commercial and possibly residential uses with construction potential of more than \$70 million.

4. Beacon Street-Commonwealth Avenue Area: To be restored to its historic function as a primary intown residential area of exceptional quality, through:

- high-rise zoning of corners on the perimeter of the area - Arlington and Beacon Streets - and construction of more than 1,000 new apartments in this decade;
- refurbishing of the Commonwealth Avenue Mall;
- a new connection to the Charles River Esplanade via the new Dartmouth Street Mall;
- new zoning provisions and architectural controls to protect existing buildings and to insure the compatibility of new structures;
- rehabilitation of 900 apartments over the next decade, aided by comprehensive and combined code enforcement plus environmental improvements and new restrictions;
- new density controls requiring at least 200 sq. ft. of gross floor area per student in dormitories and an average of 700 sq. ft. for each apartment;



- further restrictions on the growth and operations of schools in the area;
- alley improvement program for additional parking and increased amenity;
- improved lighting, sidewalks, and landscaping throughout the area;
- reduction of vehicular traffic on Marlboro Street.

5. Prudential Center: To continue development and to establish more effective links with other Back Bay elements in the vicinity of the Boylston Street-Exeter Street intersection.
6. Christian Science Church Development: To begin this year on a program that will provide 3,000 moderate-rental apartments, plus institutional, office and retail growth.
7. Park Square Area: To be stimulated through major office and apartment development along Boylston Street.
8. St. Botolph Street Neighborhood: To be conserved as a moderate-rental area, drawing strength from the abutting Christian Science Church Development and the replacement of non-residential uses with housing, and the establishment of a new senior citizens housing facility.



9. Costs: New private and institutional investment in excess of \$300 million is forecast for the next decade. Public works requirements are estimated at over \$3 million.
10. Public Enterprise: Of the seven functional areas of Back Bay:
- two are incorporated in urban renewal project plans;
  - a third is partially included in an urban renewal project;
  - a fourth is a non-assisted urban renewal project;
  - the fifth functional area is under the jurisdiction of the Back Bay Architectural Control Commission.
11. Further Public Controls: In addition to two active urban beautification projects, the plan proposes:
- extension of the architectural control zone;
  - sign control;
  - a third urban beautification project;
  - combined code enforcement - possibly a Federally-aided code enforcement project;
  - more stringent and refined zoning.
12. Community Action:
- The various interest groups in the Back Bay have been historically fragmented, but in the past two years there has developed a new





unity of purpose expressed through two temporary organizations: The Back Bay Council, and the Back Bay Planning and Development Corporation. As these two enterprises phase out, the community is now establishing a more forceful organization for unified action to be known as the Back Bay Federation for Community Development.



## I BACKGROUNDS FOR PLANNING

### 1. General Conditions and Trends

The first step in any planning program is an examination of the existing conditions as a guide to understanding the problems which are present, the economic and social forces at work, the limitations on future change, the opportunities for improvement, and the range of choice that is available.

The Back Bay contains, in this one section of the city, a large, handsome, historic in-town residential community; a strong and growing segment of the Central Business District; and a wide range of important cultural institutions. The area is widely celebrated for its superb residential architecture, its extraordinary urban landscaping, its historic qualities, its fine shops, and - as a product of these - its vital and sophisticated atmosphere.

The relationships between the Back Bay and the larger metropolitan community have been changing rapidly in recent decades. The Commonwealth-Beacon residential area began losing its prestigious status in the twenties, with an enormous outward surge during the thirties - the result of a shift in urban life-style compounded out of the new accessibility of the suburbs via the automobile, the reduced size of upper-class families, the unavailability of domestic servants,



and a number of other social and economic shifts, given impetus by the Great Depression. The exodus was replaced by young white-collar workers employed in the Central Business District, students, and others forming a housing market for rooming-houses and apartments created by inexpensive conversions. After World War II, the booming market for post-high-school education brought in many schools - professional, secretarial, junior colleges, and others - which rapidly expanded, serving commuting students and others who sought Back Bay residence.

There remained, however, a very significant housing market for middle and upper income families for whom the convenience and amenity of the Back Bay was compelling. New and converted luxury-rent apartments have been provided throughout this period. The area retains its role as a prestige in-town residential district, along with the more recent orientation.

During these same decades the commercial southerly part of the Back Bay was rapidly expanding as an office employment center, with life insurance companies the leading factor in the expansion - New England Mutual, Liberty Mutual, John Hancock, and most recently Prudential. This part of the Back Bay became perhaps the most prosperous leading edge of an extended arm of the Central Business District. It was accessible by metropolitan mass transit and



commuter railroad, and also gained new accessibility by automobile with the building of Storrow Drive. The Turnpike extension has still further enhanced auto accessibility - which in turn has underscored the inadequacy of employee parking, and the congestion of the local street system.

In between this office-employment district and the transitional residential area is the specialized retailing district of lower Boylston-Newbury, which originally took its metropolitan role as prestige shopping over from its adjacency to what was then the prestige residential area. This role has been retained in the face of conflicting trends. The loss of nearby high-income customers has been offset by improved auto access from the suburbs - but customer parking is grossly inadequate. The influx of office employees has helped sustain a market. New high-quality retail activity as part of the Prudential Center complex provides both competition and encouragement for a continued metropolitan role for this retail district.

These general comments on the land-use and activity trends in the Back Bay as a whole, in relation to the metropolitan community, have referred to the changes in the transportation system which links the area to the larger whole. In terms of auto traffic, Back Bay serves as both a terminal and a corridor. Of all the traffic entering the district, only 32% has a destination there; 68% is





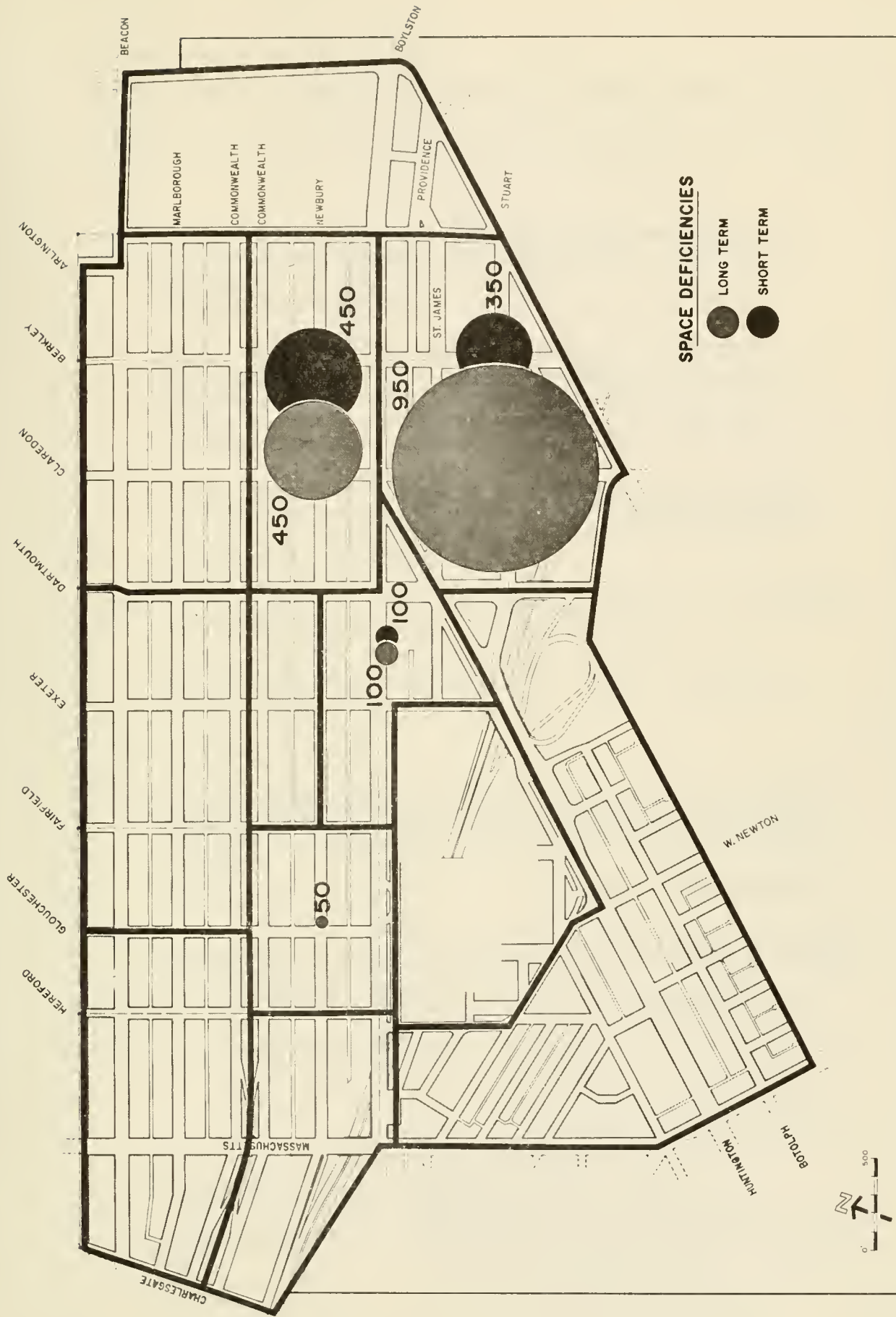
through traffic, and 62% is theoretically by-passable - that is, if an alternate route were available, it need not enter the Back Bay at all.

For the traffic that does enter Back Bay, there are major parking deficiencies - two to three thousand spaces. The lack of employee and customer spaces in the commercial areas is a main cause in adjoining residential areas both of street congestion and of over-use of curb parking, to the inconvenience of the residential population.

The transit system serving the area is distinctly second-rate. Not only are the stations dingy and inconvenient but the service, as a result both of vehicle type and of track alignment, is far from "rapid" transit. Also the lines do not extend into the outer suburbs, where the main population expansion of the metropolitan area is happening and the potential new customers and workers are living. This either deprives the Back Bay of their presence or forces them to use automobiles, further overloading the inadequate streets and parking facilities.

It is clear, then, that the various parts of the Back Bay have evolved changing relationships to the metropolitan area, both as to land use and as to transportation, and that these changes have affected the relationships of the parts to each other.





# BACK BAY STUDY AREA

# DEFICIENCIES IN PARKING SUPPLY



The Back Bay was divided into defined functional areas for study, planning and development proposals. The sub-areas are as follows:

- I - Beacon Street, Marlboro Street and Commonwealth Avenue from Arlington Street to Charlesgate East. This is the best known section of the Back Bay. It is predominantly residential.
- II - Boylston and Newbury Streets from Arlington Street to Massachusetts Avenue. This is a commercial area with an institutional center at Copley Square. The easterly blocks of this area are well known for the specialty shopping concentration.
- III - Stuart Street and St. James Street from Arlington Street to Dartmouth Street, and including the Turnpike area east of Dartmouth Street. This is the predominantly office district of the Back Bay.
- IV - St. Botolph Street area from Harcourt Street to Massachusetts Avenue, which is a middle-class housing area.
- V - Christian Science Development Area in the Fenway Urban Renewal Project.
- VI - Prudential Center
- VII - The Park Square Area bounded by Arlington Street, Boylston Street, Charles Street and Stuart Street, all of which is included in the Central Business District Urban Renewal Project.

(see map on following page)

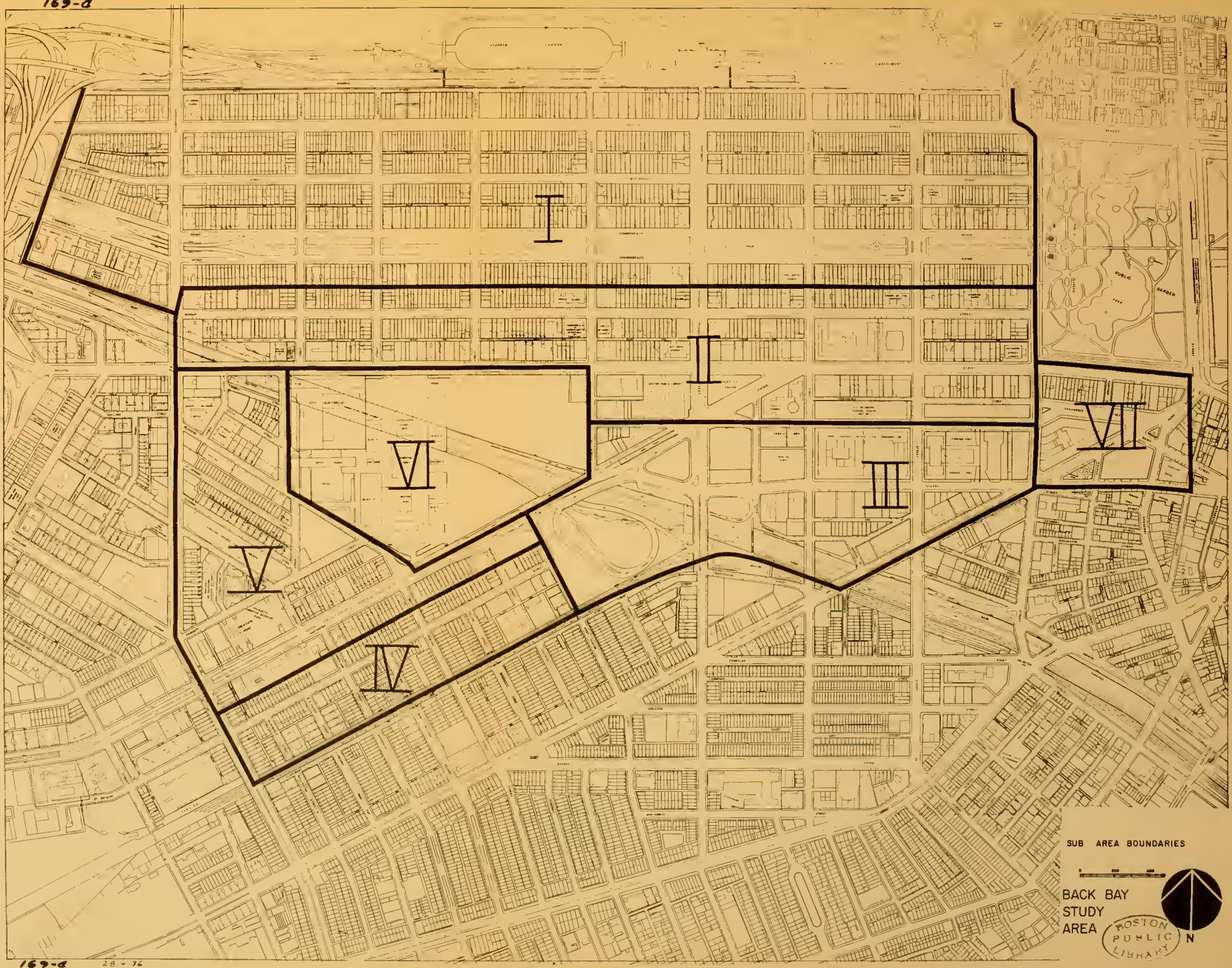
As a more specific basis for understanding and coping with each sub-area, there follow a series of analyses of the existing conditions and trends in each.

## 2. The Commonwealth-Beacon Residential Area

The Commonwealth-Beacon Residential Area extends from the alley







SUB AREA BOUNDARIES



BACK BAY  
STUDY  
AREA







between Newbury Street and Commonwealth Avenue to the Charles River, and from the Public Gardens to Charlesgate. Historically, this was the home of the wealthy Bostonians, and while their distinguished residences remain in place along with the original amenities, this neighborhood has been overtaken by vast social changes.

Since World War I, there have been many sound conversions of town houses from their original functions as single-family dwellings into fine apartments and duplex units. In addition, there have been replacements of town houses by larger and more modern apartment buildings.

But replacement has been on a very small scale, and conversions, to a large extent, have sought maximum short-run return with minimum investment.

As a result, there have been wholesale conversions into poor quality, small apartments and rooming houses over an extended period of time. Added to this, there has been the massive growth of educational uses during the period of 1955 to 1965.

During the last decade, the number of mature residents, including young married couples, families and elderly persons, has declined at the rate of about 600 persons per year. Meanwhile, the



number of students and other young transients has increased at approximately the same rate.

It is estimated that the total population of the Back Bay has increased from 19,700 to 21,400 persons during the period of 1955 to 1965. However, during the same period, the number of regular residents declined from about 16,700 to 10,800, while the number of students and transients increased from 3,000 to 10,600.

While this was the trend for the 10-year period, it was actually accelerated during the second half of this period (1960 to 1965) when the rate of increase in students and transients was much higher than during the 1955 to 1960 period.

The population of students and young transients approximately equals the number of mature residents. Today, the single family and even the owner occupied building are in a very distinct minority. Of the 10,600 students in 1965, about 2,000 live in apartments. The remainder - 40% of the total population - live in group quarters, i.e., in dormitories, fraternities, and rooming houses.

The rapid growth of schools and the relentless exploitation by some owners of the young, single-person residential market in rooming houses and cheap conversions have had an extremely adverse



effect on the area's social stability.

The effect of this change of building and environmental quality has been dramatic, negative, and visible. The Back Bay's strength as a residential community has been waning, and new social problems have been mounting. Only within the past year or so, through the efforts of local elected officials and Back Bay civic groups, has there been any effective effort to obtain stronger controls over the growth of dormitories - a first step in halting the rapid decline.

Meanwhile, some schools in the area function at high standards and as good neighbors. Others are moving out. At the same time, our studies show a good market for middle- and upper-income rentals in the area, in new apartments or in high-standard conversions.

Of the families that do still live in this area - excluding persons in group quarters and households made up of unrelated individuals - there is a very high proportion of high incomes (39% over \$10,000 in 1959), three times that of Boston and nearly twice the metropolitan proportion. The housing market is sharply segmented between these high-income families and the larger number of low-income households, mainly students. The potential for marketing purposes lies in increasing the number and proportion of high-income households.



In terms of physical conditions, ninety percent of Back Bay buildings are sound. The most serious problems stem from functional obsolescence - poor heating and plumbing systems, no elevators in five- and six-story buildings, bad layouts, inadequate kitchens. Current studies indicate, however, that carefully designed conversions of such buildings into good-quality apartments is financially feasible and even profitable.

New construction of high-density, high-rent apartments is also both feasible and profitable, but only in situations where very high density is permitted and where a good-sized site can be assembled.

Metropolitan market studies suggest a long-term, sustained market for high-rent dwelling units in the Back Bay, given a balanced, vigorous renewal of the area - which is considered necessary to attract both investors and high-income tenants. The estimate is for an average of 200 new apartment units per year, and an equal number of rehabilitated or converted units, totalling 300 to 400 units per year.

Of an estimated ten to eleven thousand dwelling units existing in the Back Bay in 1965, perhaps one-third can be considered already of satisfactory quality, the products of recent new construction, of prior high-quality conversion, or of older units that have been well





maintained. If the above market prospects were realized, four thousand high-quality units would be added in ten years, replacing or modernizing between two and three thousand poor-quality units. The resulting balance would be the reverse of the present balance, or about twice as many of good quality as of poor quality.

An essential objective of the City of Boston is the attraction of middle- and upper-income families and persons to central city residence, to provide the social and economic balance which the city urgently needs. The Commonwealth-Beacon area, by its location, conveniences, amenities and the value of its existing structures provides an outstanding opportunity to meet this basic municipal objective. An obvious policy for the Back Bay should be to expand opportunities for good residential use and to combat all of the forces that weigh against the stability of such uses.

### 3. The St. Botolph Residential Area

The St. Botolph Residential Area lies between the New Haven tracks and the rear of the Huntington Avenue frontage, from Massachusetts Avenue to the Turnpike Interchange area. This small district was developed later than the Commonwealth-Beacon area and built up in a relatively modest fashion. Despite its small size and the strong pressures of blighting influences and some intrusions, it continues as a viable neighborhood at moderate rentals. The occupancy is



quite mixed, including both lower-middle-income families and - as a result of apparently recent modest-quality conversions - some student and single-person tenants.

The prospects for this area should be enhanced by the projected Christian Science development, which is proposed to replace the Huntington Avenue frontage with housing. Opportunities for change within the area are, however, limited. The area has neither the amenity nor the locational advantages of the Commonwealth-Beacon area.

Nevertheless, there may be opportunities for new development. The old Perkins School may well be abandoned as part of a school-building reorganization for the larger district of which it is part. At the northeasterly end of the area are a number of old non-residential buildings, some now in institutional use and others in commercial and light industrial use. Some or all of these may well be abandoned for their present activities in the coming decade, offering sites for some kind of new construction.

Part of the context for decisions on new uses for these sites is the pressure due to be created by the Christian Science development. There will be displacement of many families through clearance, many of whom are elderly. Furthermore, there is a growing realization of the serious lack of a housing supply in this general vicinity



for lower-middle-income families.

These conditions suggest a policy for the St. Botolph area of expansion and improvement as an attractive, pleasant, moderate-rental neighborhood in a relatively favorable location.

#### 4. Institutional Conditions and Trends

A great variety of institutions occur throughout the Back Bay; this has been a strong element of its fabric from the beginning. One of the first buildings in the area was the Museum of Natural History, in the early 1860's (now Bonwit-Teller). Many churches were also original settlers. Copley Square takes its character from the Boston Public Library and Trinity Church. Indeed, throughout its history and still today, the institutions of the Back Bay constitute a non-monetary asset that far outweighs the nonpayment of taxes.

As has been indicated earlier, however, the proliferation of schools and their ancillary housing in the Commonwealth-Beacon residential area has created problems of a serious nature. In general, the problems result when an activity - in this case, schools - takes over an older structure designed for a different purpose, which is not capable of serving the needs of the new activity. Schools for the college age group have traditionally



been built in "campuses", containing not only classrooms, administrative and faculty offices, and dormitories, but also eating places, gymnasias, indoor space for recreation and social activities, and outdoor space for athletics and for more informal activities and recreations. The experience of the Back Bay confirms the wisdom of this tradition. In the absence of these indoor and outdoor school-provided spaces for social and active recreation, the streets and paths and park areas of the Back Bay have been taken over as the collective campus of the several thousand students. For the non-school residents and property-owners, and for the prospects for investment in non-school new development, the effects have been most serious.

The other side of the coin, of course, is the fact that higher education is a "growth industry" of great importance to the health of the metropolitan area. Indeed, if all of the private, non-tax-paying colleges and universities were to depart, the blow to the metropolitan - and the City of Boston - economy would be disastrous. Education is an economic necessity to Boston, quite aside from the contributions that it makes to the development of the City's young people and to the cultural climate.

For the Back Bay, the possibility of clearing out all schools and colleges is neither desirable nor possible. The pressure for





still greater quantities of higher education as this age-group continues to swell cannot be denied. Nevertheless, a basis for a policy for the future toward schools in the Back Bay rests upon a number of existing conditions: the proliferation of additional schools, dormitories, and fraternities has been inhibited by recent changes in the zoning code; some of the present schools, recognizing a need for expansion which cannot be physically met within the high-density conditions in the Back Bay, are seeking other locations; many of the present conditions in Back Bay schools - especially in dormitories and rooming-houses occupied entirely by students - are drastically substandard in terms of the kind and amount of space per student, judged by the standards provided in similar institutions elsewhere, and are thus appropriate objects of further regulation.

Also it is clear that responsible schools need not be flatly incompatible with the environmental requirements of the non-school population. Schools can provide at least indoor space for recreation and social activity; they can assure adequate interior space standards in student housing; they can take responsibility for student car-ownership and use, for curfews for resident students, and for other aspects of student behavior. Some of the schools have done this. Another hopeful evidence is the major effort of some of the fraternities to demonstrate that even these kinds of student living-groups can be good neighbors.



The prospect, then, is that it is possible to bring the school component of the Back Bay into a tolerable balance with the residential component, with which it has thus far been in increasing conflict.

The other forms of institutions do not seem to pose a problem. Even some of those which occupy converted residences have proven assets rather than liabilities, at the least in maintaining the good appearance of mansions for which there is no alternate economic use - such as headquarters of charitable or civic organizations; at the best in contributing to the cultural values and leisure needs of other residents - such as some adult education centers;-or to the social prestige of the vicinity, - such as a consulate.

There remain the many institutions occupying buildings designed and built for their unique purposes - churches, the library. These are not only cultural assets, but visual focal points, adding to the pattern and structure of the Back Bay's amenities.

##### 5. The Boylston-Newbury Commercial Area

Boylston and Newbury Streets in the Back Bay were originally developed primarily for residential purposes, with a number of major



institutions on Boylston Street near Copley Square - churches, the original M.I.T. buildings, the Public Library. The conversion from residential to commercial uses began around the turn of the century, spreading westward. In the thirties and forties even some institutions were displaced, one by conversion (to Bonwit-Teller), two by clearance (for New England Mutual).

The easterly blocks of Boylston and Newbury Streets are characterized by strong retail and commercial uses. Retailing has remained steady and shown growth during the recent decades, while downtown retail volumes declined. The decline of the residential area has generally been offset by the growth of office uses. The opening of the Turnpike and Prudential Center have had some beneficial effect, although the impact of these new developments has yet to be felt fully.

Easterly Newbury Street is unique in its concentration of sophisticated stores and charming environment created by the skillful adaptation of town houses to business uses.

In the easterly blocks of Boylston Street retailing is less continuous, but there has been strong growth in office uses.

Both streets have suffered from various degrees of functional obsolescence of buildings and the decline of the residential area,



and both are handicapped by weak public transportation and parking shortages. Both are sensitive to the prospect that the new retail concentration to be developed in Prudential Center can result in an excessively elongated shopping area lacking in focus and continuity.

West of Copley Square, both streets are in transition. On Newbury Street, the westward movement of art galleries and the new Boston Architectural Center are positive influences in the five westerly blocks which are otherwise characterized by a mixture of secondary uses.

The five westerly blocks of Boylston Street, where functional obsolescence is especially dramatic, have responded to Prudential Center in the increase of various entertainment and eating activities.

At Copley Square - still the meeting place of the Back Bay - there has been major demolition, but with great prospects for new development and improvement under a plan already approved.

The market prospects for strengthening and extending retail activity in the entire Boylston-Newbury area are favorable, but dependent in part on district improvements rather than solely on individual enterprise. The area's strength is its ability to attract high-income shoppers from a wide radius because of the





high quality of its stores and the unique nature of its specialties. These, in turn, are tied in with convenience of access - highways plus parking, or comfortable and fast transit; and visual attractiveness - outside the store as well as inside, a quality of good taste rather than garish commercialism.

Exceedingly important to the future of both ends of this area, in the light of the new retailing magnets due in Prudential Center (Lord & Taylor, probably others), is a sense of continuity along Boylston Street from Arlington toward Massachusetts Avenue and a high level of psychological accessibility which can compensate for a long walking distance.

These conclusions lead directly to the policies and proposals of the plan for this area.

#### 6. The Stuart-St. James Office Area

The Stuart-St. James district has been Back Bay's steady growth area during the Twentieth Century as office and insurance uses have been developed at high density on former railroad yards - development processes which, with the completion of Prudential Center, now extends from Park Square to Massachusetts Avenue.

The heaviest concentration of Back Bay's 32,000 employees is in the Stuart-St. James Avenue area.



Just as the other business sections of Back Bay, this sub-area is handicapped by transit and parking deficiencies. It is underdeveloped and offers great possibilities for the future.

A relatively immediate prospect is a major expansion of the John Hancock Insurance Company, which will take up a substantial site now underdeveloped. There will remain a number of other potential development-sites.

The possibility of air-rights construction over Turnpike property offers a prospect which could be either asset or liability. It would be adverse to the community to divert to this location an investment which might otherwise occupy a site that would remain unused or underused. It would be beneficial to develop an activity not competitive with other Boston locations, that would not contribute to the traffic problems of the interchange vicinity.

#### 7. Prudential Center and Christian Science Project

The establishment of Prudential Center has given all of Boston, including the Back Bay, an effective start in its resurgence and modernization. The Center is attracting in a sizable way new employment to the Back Bay, and it has made this section of the city the focus of Boston's sizable convention industry, centered on the War Memorial Auditorium and the new hotel.



In its second stage of construction, Prudential will provide over seven hundred fine apartments which will have a distinctly beneficial effect on the business area of the Back Bay, though offering a degree of competition with similar apartments in Back Bay.

In its third stage, it will produce an outstanding retail concentration which, if sufficiently connected with the existing retail blocks, will give tremendous stimulation to the Back Bay as a shopping center.

The Christian Science Development Project now in execution will create a new sub-area with housing and institutional expansion which will make a valuable contribution to the economic and social strength and the aesthetics of the Back Bay.

#### 8. Backgrounds for Planning

This summary of the conditions, the trends, and the prospects for the various parts of the Back Bay presents in very general terms the point of departure for the recommendations contained in the next chapter. It includes only the highlights of the findings of the specialist consultants - on traffic and parking, on land use, on economic analysis and market trends, and others. The reports of



these studies are available for detailed review.

These studies have formed the basis for the policies and proposals which constitute the Development Plan, and also for the programs recommended to carry out the content of the Plan.





## II A DEVELOPMENT PLAN FOR BACK BAY

### 1. The General Plan

The highlights of the ten-year Development Plan were summarized in the Introduction. The main purpose of the Plan is to provide guidelines for the future development of Back Bay. In doing so it makes recommendations which will influence not only the location and kind of new development but also its character and quality. The Plan proposes standards for density, visual appearance and for levels of service and maintenance. Its proposals include recommendations to coordinate public improvements with private development.

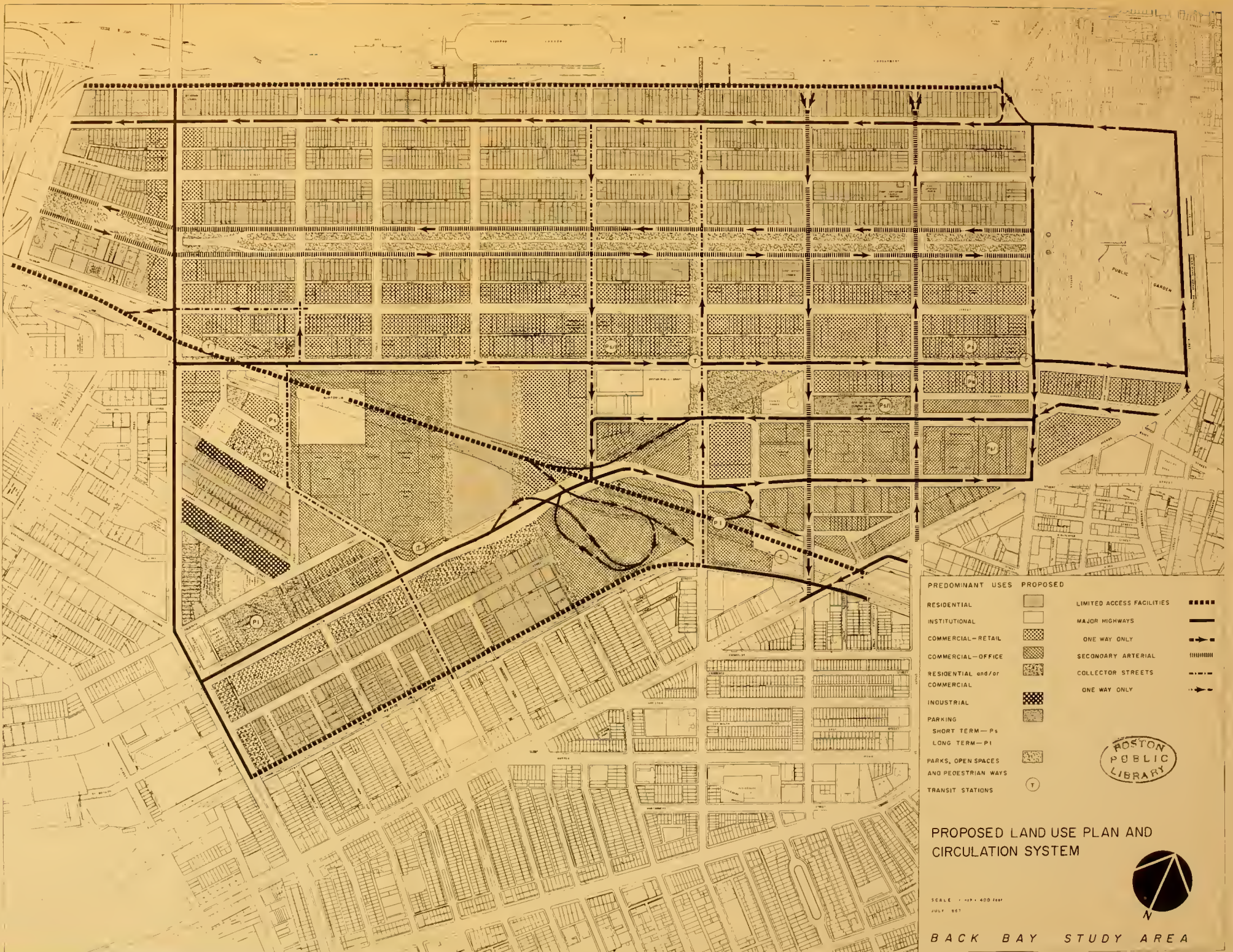
The proposed basic land use and circulation scheme is graphically described by the map on the following page.

In brief, residential development is proposed to predominate in the Commonwealth-Beacon area, with emphasis on the middle and upper-income housing market through new construction and high-quality conversion, and in the St. Botolph area for the middle-income market mainly through rehabilitation. For the institutional component of the Back Bay's fabric, the proposal is to raise the standards and to some degree reduce the extent of schools, colleges and student residence within the main residential area; and to retain, strengthen, and serve the wide range of other types of institution throughout the Back Bay. For commerce, it is proposed to strengthen and extend





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PREDOMINANT USES PROPOSED

- |  |  |                           |  |
|--|--|---------------------------|--|
| RESIDENTIAL                            |  | LIMITED ACCESS FACILITIES |  |
| INSTITUTIONAL                          |  | MAJOR HIGHWAYS            |  |
| COMMERCIAL—RETAIL                      |  | ONE WAY ONLY              |  |
| COMMERCIAL—OFFICE                      |  | SECONDARY ARTERIAL        |  |
| RESIDENTIAL and/or COMMERCIAL          |  | COLLECTOR STREETS         |  |
| INDUSTRIAL                             |  | ONE WAY ONLY              |  |
| PARKING                                |  |                           |  |
| SHORT TERM—P <sub>s</sub>              |  |                           |  |
| LONG TERM—P <sub>l</sub>               |  |                           |  |
| PARKS, OPEN SPACES AND PEDESTRIAN WAYS |  |                           |  |
| TRANSIT STATIONS                       |  |                           |  |

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PROPOSED LAND USE PLAN AND  
CIRCULATION SYSTEM

SCALE 1" = 400' 1000'

JULY 1957



BACK BAY STUDY AREA





westward the specialized retailing area on Boylston and Newbury Streets, increasing accessory parking and providing linkage to new related uses in the Prudential Center; and to encourage more intensive office-building development of the Stuart-St. James area.

A pervading feature of the plan that enters into the proposals for all of these areas is a concern for the quality of urban design. This is an intention not only to preserve the unique architectural character of the Back Bay, but also to enhance it and capitalize upon it. Though high standards of visual appearance may discourage some forms of investment, such forms would probably be liabilities rather than assets to the rest of the area in any case. The protection to values provided through these high standards will encourage rather than inhibit the kind of investment which the Back Bay wants.

The transportation and circulation features of the Development Plan are designed to improve both internal accessibility and access to the larger metropolitan community. These features are described more fully in the following section, followed by detailed proposals for each of the sub-areas of the Back Bay.

## 2. Transportation and Circulation

For improved ties to the rest of the metropolitan area, both immediately adjoining districts and more distant parts, the Back



Bay plan must rely most heavily on plans and proposals already initiated and in process of development by other public agencies.

(See Report A, Barton-Aschman Assoc.)

Considering first the improvements in accessibility to most distant areas, there are firm plans to begin operation of increased-speed railroad service on the New Haven line in the very near future to Providence, and later to New York and Washington. It would be desirable to assure a stop in this area, at the Back Bay Station as it is now or as it may be redeveloped.

(In the more distant future, innovative technologies may provide genuinely high-speed ground transport - 300 miles per hour or faster - in the Boston-Washington Northeast Corridor. The kind of device or route is too speculative to be able to be included in this ten-year plan; but it is hoped that the Back Bay may also have a stop, or even a terminal, on this new system).

At the next level of distance for public transportation are the proposed extensions of the MBTA rapid transit system. These offer perhaps the greatest opportunity for dramatic improvement of Back Bay accessibility in the next five to ten years. For optimal advantages to the Back Bay, these extensions should reach out as far as possible to tap the new-growth areas in the metropolitan fringe:





The MBTA extension to the South Shore is expected to be operational in 1969, and it should connect to the Cambridge-Ashmont subway tunnel, providing an easy transfer - via Park Street - to the Back Bay.

The southwest transit extension, providing full rapid-transit service on the New Haven tracks, should be operational by 1972. Its northern terminal should be in Reading and the southern terminal should be in Dedham, so that the line connects important populous suburbs to the north and south of the city with a route that goes through downtown with a new station at Copley Square.

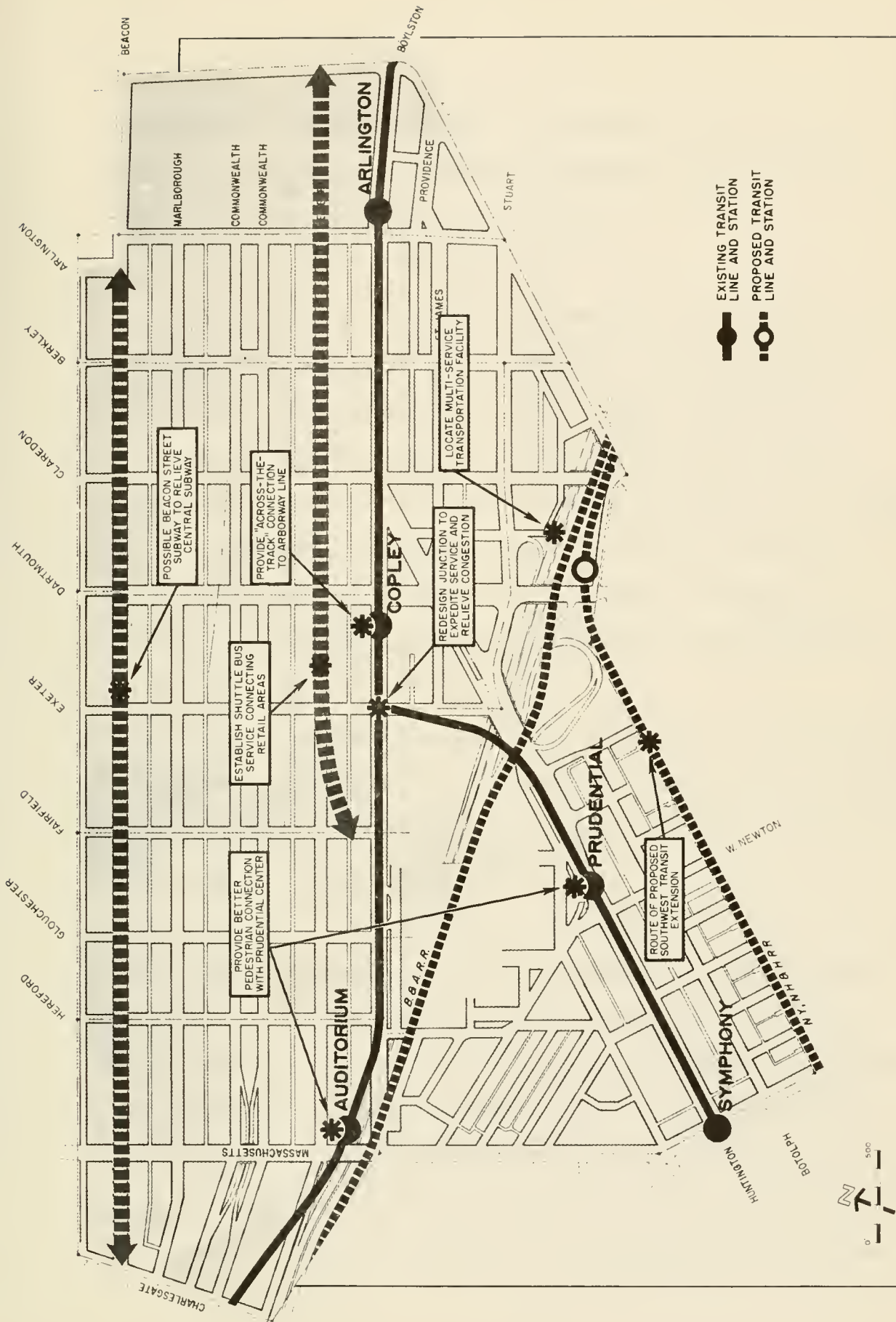
The central subway now serving Back Bay should receive extensive modernization and improved stations, together with new equipment and improved schedules. The expansion of capacity will require substantial new improvements which are under study by the MBTA.

These transit improvements will multiply the capacity of Back Bay access and will set the stage for a long period of continuous growth in the Back Bay business area. They are an essential part of the Plan.

Other metropolitan projects of value and concern to the Back Bay are the projected elements in the express highway system, which are also strongly urged. One is the Inner Belt, decisions on which have been delayed by route controversies; sooner or later it is expected to be built. One of its advantages to Back Bay will be the diversion of cross-town trucks, and some other traffic, from Massachusetts Avenue. Another will be improved Back Bay access from all of the radial expressways in all sectors of Greater Boston which will tie into the Inner Belt, given a smooth access from the Belt itself to Back Bay (via Storrow Drive and the South End By-Pass).

The South End By-Pass, a proposed inward extension of the South-





# BACK BAY STUDY AREA POSSIBLE TRANSIT IMPROVEMENTS

BARTON - ASCHMAN ASSOCIATES · CHICAGO, ILLINOIS

FIGURE 4



west Expressway, is also expected to be completed in less than ten years. This will assure quick auto accessibility from a large suburban area not now served by modern highways.

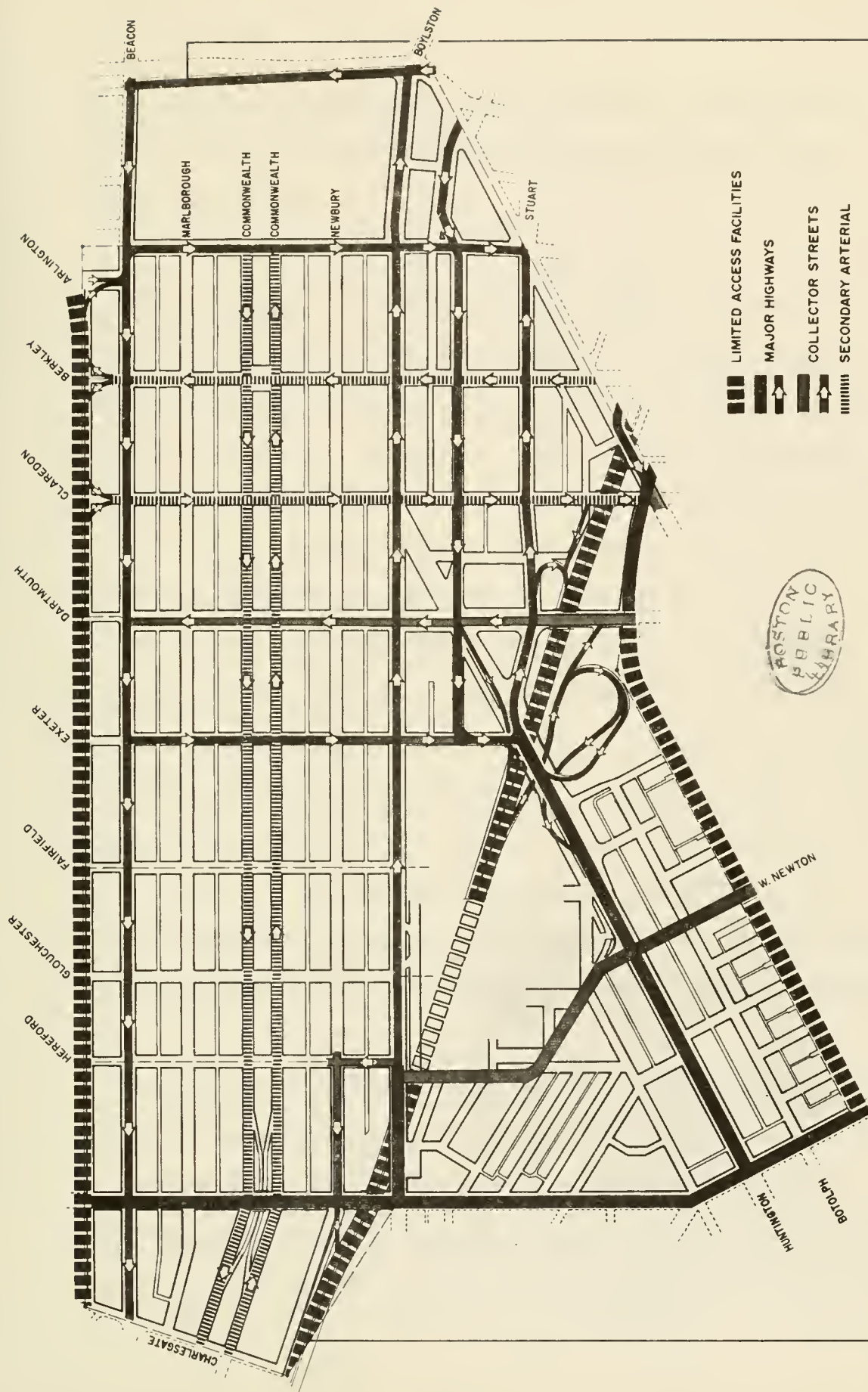
The final "outside" transportation improvement is a possible new integrated transportation facility near Copley Square, combining a railroad station, a new transit station, expanded parking, and possibly an intercity bus terminal, with good pedestrian access to Copley Square. The potential site is bounded by Dartmouth, Buckingham, Clarendon, Stanhope, and Stuart Streets. It includes Turnpike air-rights construction. This proposal needs further development and should receive more detailed study by the agencies directly involved.

The street system internal to the Back Bay, with its connections to the metropolitan system, is presented graphically on the following page. There is a hierarchy of five street-types, ranked in order of capacity, speed, and distance of travel.

The highest class of street is the expressway or limited access facility, of which three are shown. The Turnpike Extension links the Back Bay to the western suburbs, with interchanges at Massachusetts Avenue and the Huntington-Dartmouth vicinity. It also offers a tie to the southeastern suburbs reached by the Southeast Expressway, except that there are no on-and-off facilities in that direction between the Back Bay and the Turnpike. The proposed South End By-Pass







# BACK BAY CIRCULATION SYSTEM

## BACK BAY STUDY AREA

BARTON-ASCHMAN ASSOCIATES · CHICAGO, ILLINOIS

FIGURE 2





and the further proposed service roads coupled with improvements to Stuart and Kneeland Streets will provide greatly improved access between these points.

Storrow Drive is the second expressway shown, skirting the Back Bay, providing access to the inner western and northwestern suburbs and Cambridge, and to the northern and northeastern sectors via the Mystic River Bridge and the Summer Tunnel. There is an interchange in the Charlesgate with complex access to Commonwealth Avenue and Beacon Street and partial access at Massachusetts Avenue. It is proposed to change the access points at the downtown end of Back Bay, closing the east-bound exit at Dartmouth; keeping the east-bound exits at Clarendon and Arlington; creating a new west-bound exit at Clarendon and improving both exits at Arlington; and retaining the east-and west-bound entrances to Storrow at Berkeley. The slightly revised linkage will preserve the present good access to and from the inner commercial development on lower Boylston and Stuart Streets, and improve the access to the Newbury retailing area and the vicinity of John Hancock, both of which will experience growth.

The other limited access facility is the proposed South End By-Pass, which ties the end of the projected Southwest Expressway into the downtown street system. It parallels the New Haven tracks to Dartmouth Street, and thence provides access to Berkeley and Clarendon into the Back Bay as well as tying into the service-road system on



each side of the inner Turnpike extension.

The second level of street-types is the major arterial, connecting large urban districts together, carrying heavy traffic volumes but also serving the frontage property. The Back Bay is served - and cut up by - two east-west and two north-south sets of major arterials. One - which serves the east-west flows - is a pair of widely separated one-way streets, west-bound Beacon Street and east-bound Boylston. No changes are suggested. The other east-west arterial is Huntington Avenue as far in as Exeter Street, where the traffic splits into the one-way pair of west-bound St. James and east-bound Stuart Street. The significant change relating to this facility is the diverting of Huntington Avenue traffic between Dartmouth and Exeter, leaving only the west-bound Turnpike on-ramp. This is proposed in order to enhance the development prospects of that block, inviting air-rights construction over Huntington Avenue.

The north-south major arterials are the Charles Street-Arlington Street one-way pair at the intown end of the Back Bay, and Massachusetts Avenue at the other end. These both perform their arterial functions at present as effectively as seems possible, and no changes are suggested.

The third level is indicated as secondary arterials, whose function is partially the carrying of through traffic from and to the areas beyond the Back Bay as well as the serving of destinations within the district and



connecting its various parts. The plan shows two of these. One, east-west, is Commonwealth Avenue. In spite of its pre-eminent role in the image of the Back Bay, this street dead-ends at the Public Gardens and thus cannot serve a higher-ranking traffic function. This is fortunate for that magnificent avenue, whose amenity could not survive conversion to a higher traffic capacity.

The other secondary arterial is a one-way pair, Berkeley north-bound from the South End to Storrow Drive, and Clarendon south-bound from the Drive to the South End. This pair of modest streets must assume a heavy traffic-carrying function; it is fortunate that relatively few residential properties actually front upon them.

The fourth rank of street-types is the collector street, whose main function is to interconnect parts of the district and not to serve external traffic. The plan shows two of these, of which one is the one-way pair, Dartmouth and Exeter. Dartmouth Street is proposed to be one-way north-bound, with the westerly half of the right of way converted to a pedestrian mall. This is one of the major recommendations of the Development Plan in its symbolic significance and as a public improvement. Its effect upon the circulation plan is to reduce the traffic-carrying importance of Dartmouth Street, which becomes paired with a south-bound Exeter Street merely to interconnect Beacon Street and Copley Square.



The only other collector street is West Newton, leading northward from the South End across the Christian Science project to Boylston Street, then connecting to Hereford and west on Newbury to tie into the Turnpike access ramp at Massachusetts Avenue.

All of the other Back Bay streets are proposed to be minor or local access streets, whose sole function is intended to be access to abutting property rather than carrying through traffic. In a grid system like that of the Back Bay, this will not work completely. The purpose can, however, be furthered by the detailed design of street intersections and the local control of traffic movements and parking. The two streets requiring attention from this point of view are Marlborough, to become a more purely local residential street, and Newbury, to be handled as a shopping street, with through traffic discouraged on both.

This street plan will handle the traffic requirements of the area adequately. Although it is less than ideal, it will not only permit but encourage the level and quality of development proposed for the various parts of the Back Bay. It is the best that can be achieved in the short ten years ahead.

The handling of parking needs and of pedestrian facilities, though technically elements of a circulation plan, are localized in nature; their presentation is incorporated in the discussion of proposals for the various sub-areas, in the following sections.





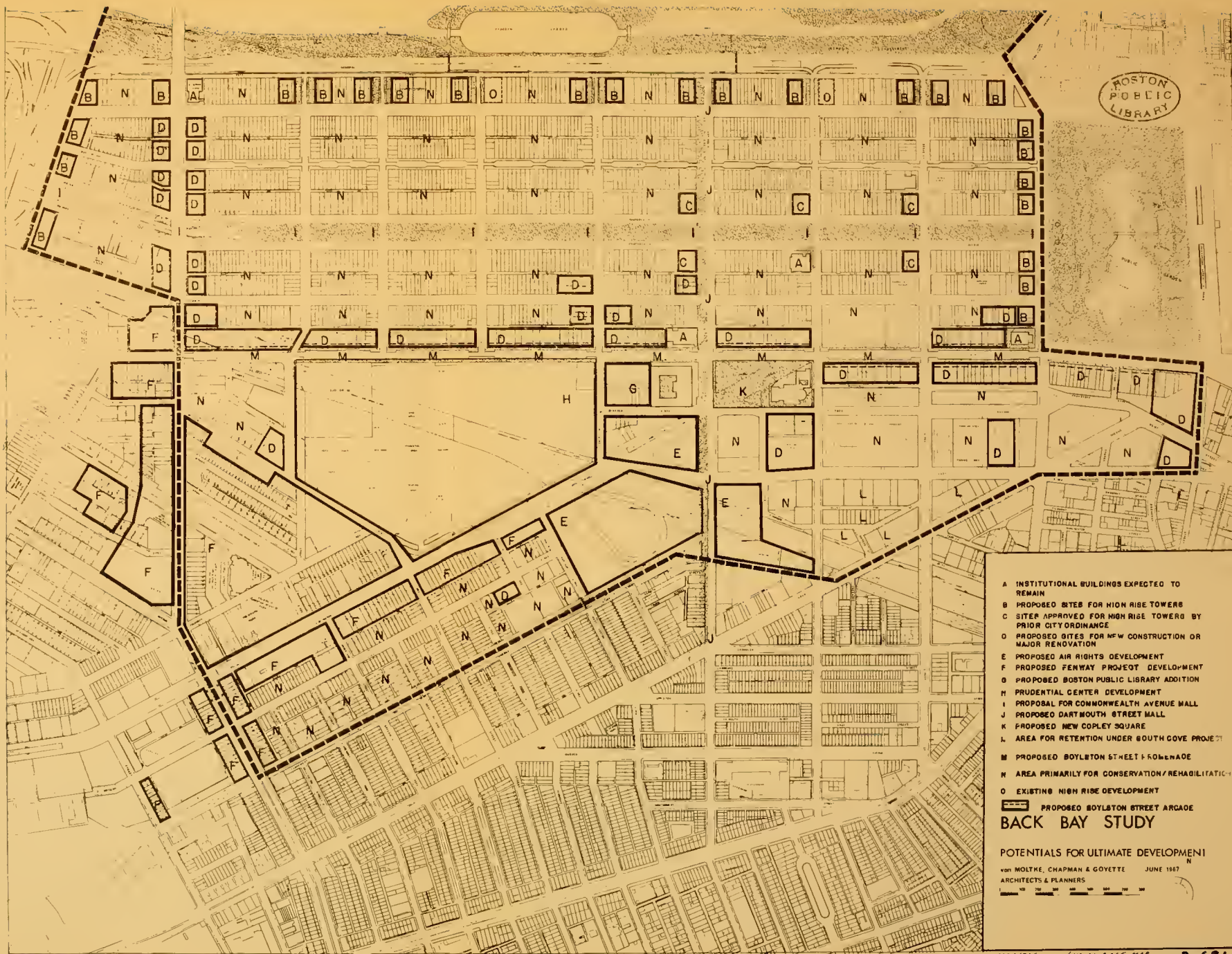
### 3. The Commonwealth-Beacon Residential Area

The Commonwealth-Beacon area is proposed for predominantly residential use. The plan encourages new apartment construction to the limit of the prospective high-rent market, a similar degree of high-quality modernization and conversion, re-establishment of a better balance between residence and schools with their related uses, and a general upgrading of the amenities of the area.

New high-density, tower apartment construction is recommended for those limited locations which offer special advantages of site and view for luxury residence, and where also this kind of structure - up to this date foreign to the Back Bay except for two buildings on Beacon Street - can occur without damage to the architectural character of the heart of the Back Bay. These locations are on the periphery of this area: on corner sites along Arlington Street facing the Public Gardens; on the north side of Beacon Street, overlooking the Charles River Basin and oriented so as not to cast winter shadows across the rest of the residential area; on Massachusetts Avenue; and along the Charlesgate, also facing a wide public open space (see map on following page.)

In 1965, prior to the preparation of the Back Bay Development Plan, the Boston City Council adopted an ordinance establishing eight locations for high-rise apartment buildings on Commonwealth Avenue,





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- A INSTITUTIONAL BUILDINGS EXPECTED TO REMAIN
  - B PROPOSED SITES FOR HIGH RISE TOWERS
  - C SITES APPROVED FOR HIGH RISE TOWERS BY PRIOR CITY ORDINANCE
  - D PROPOSED SITES FOR NEW CONSTRUCTION OR MAJOR RENOVATION
  - E PROPOSED AIR RIGHTS DEVELOPMENT
  - F PROPOSED FENWAY PROJECT DEVELOPMENT
  - G PROPOSED BOSTON PUBLIC LIBRARY ADDITION
  - H PRUDENTIAL CENTER DEVELOPMENT
  - I PROPOSAL FOR COMMONWEALTH AVENUE MALL
  - J PROPOSED DARTMOUTH STREET MALL
  - K PROPOSED NEW COPLEY SQUARE
  - L AREA FOR RETENTION UNDER SOUTH COVE PROJECT
  - M PROPOSED BOYLSTON STREET FOLIOLENADE
  - N AREA PRIMARILY FOR CONSERVATION/REHABILITATION
  - O EXISTING HIGH RISE DEVELOPMENT
  - PROPOSED BOYLSTON STREET ARCADE
- BACK BAY STUDY**

POTENTIALS FOR ULTIMATE DEVELOPMENT

VON MOLTRE, CHAPMAN & GOVETTE JUNE 1967  
ARCHITECTS & PLANNERS

1" = 100' 0"





## NOTES ON ILLUSTRATIONS

1. The map preceding this page indicates those sites where new development, redevelopment, and major rehabilitation is expected in the future. A principal method of channelling development into this form is revised zoning. To observe this relationship the "Ultimate Development" map may be compared directly to the two proposed zoning envelope exhibits following Page 71.
2. Since "Ultimate Development" cannot be reached in a single decade, the \$325 million in private investment forecast in this report and the policies proposed will achieve only a portion of the ultimate change. The development pattern of the next decade is indicated on the Illustrative Site Plan following this page. This plan shows the areas where major changes most likely will occur from 1967 to 1977. Note the heavy concentration of new development in the area bounded by Boylston Street, Exeter Street, the Massachusetts Turnpike Extension and Clarendon Street--also, the Christian Science development area west and southwest of Prudential Center.

This map also shows the locations for apartment towers, although in this case, it should be realized that only about one-third of the sites may be expected to be redeveloped in the next decade. Since this form of private redevelopment is quite unpredictable by exact location, all of the potential sites are shown.

3. Following the Illustrative Site Plan is a perspective of Copley Square showing the Sheraton-Plaza Hotel, the Library, and a new building projected for the "double triangle" site south of the Library. This development proposal emerged from the real estate analysis and is first defined in the "Ultimate Development" map. It then reappears in the illustrative site plan and the zoning map. The uses intended for this site are commercial, parking, and either apartments or a hotel.





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CHRISTIAN SCIENTIST CHURCH DEVELOPMENT

PRUDENTIAL CENTER DEVELOPMENT

BOSTON PUBLIC LIBRARY

CORLEY SQUARE PLAZA

TRINITY CHURCH

- B BUILDINGS OF SOCIAL, ARCHITECTURAL OR HISTORIC SIGNIFICANCE
- C PROPOSED SITES FOR HIGH RISE TOWERS
- D PROPOSED SITES FOR NEW CONSTRUCTION OR MAJOR RENOVATION
- E PROPOSED AIR RIGHTS
- F PROPOSED FUTURE PROJECT DEVELOPMENT
- G EXISTING HIGH RISE TOWERS

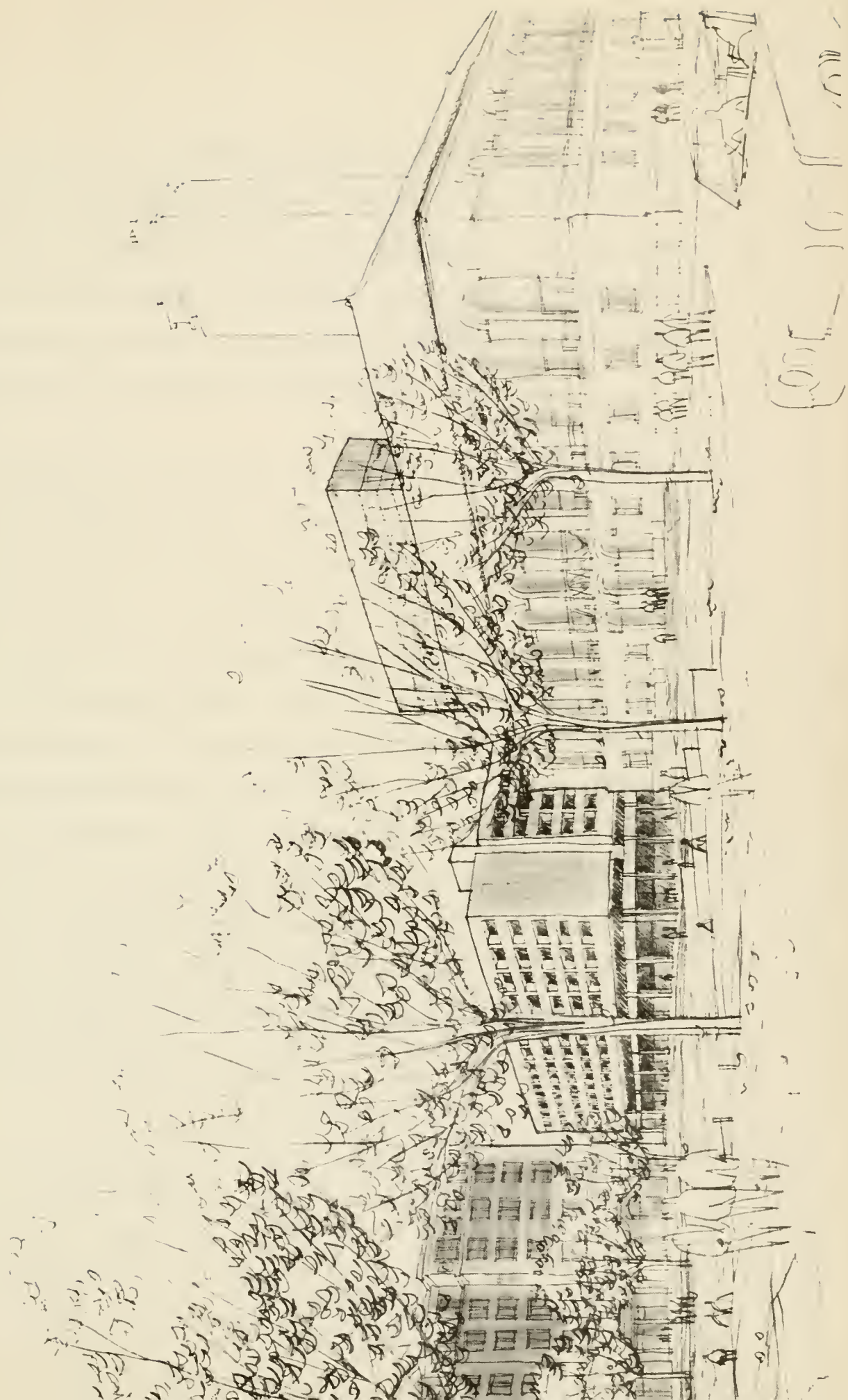
- PROJECT BOUNDARY LINE
- PROPOSED LANDSCAPES
- UNDATED NEW DEVELOPMENT

BACK BAY STUDY  
PROPOSED ZONING ENVELOPE  
ILLUSTRATIVE SITE PLAN

MAP SCALE: 1" = 100' (25.3m)  
DATE: 1971  
DRAWN BY: J. J. COUGHLIN









specifically, at the westerly intersections of Arlington, Berkeley, Clarendon, and Dartmouth Streets. The height limit for these buildings is 200 feet, except for the Arlington Street corners where the limit is 285 feet. The ordinance imposes stringent dimensional controls and a rigorous design review procedure upon any high-rise construction to be erected on these sites.

In respect to those peripheral locations, which this report recommends designating for high-density tower apartment construction, height limits should be restricted to 120 feet on Massachusetts Avenue, 200 feet on Beacon Street corners, 200 feet on Charlesgate East, and 285 feet on Arlington Street. In each case there should be firm dimensional control (see Report E, Bok), as well as careful design control by the Back Bay Architectural Commission up to the standards recommended in Report B by von Moltke, Chapman & Goyette. It is believed that, subject to these height and design controls, enough new high-rent apartment construction will be undertaken to reverse the negative trends of the recent past, to stimulate the creation of an equal number of high-rent units in modernized old buildings, and to launch a restoration of the prestige of the Back Bay as a residential area.



This general proposal would legally open up a considerable number of corner sites for apartment towers. Many of these corners, however, are not conceivably available; some are occupied by churches or other undisplaceable major buildings, and quite a number are already occupied by apartments, either new or in excellent condition. The plan proposes a rate of construction that might result in ten or twelve such towers in the next ten years. It is neither necessary nor proper that the Plan should pinpoint their locations. This can and should be left to the workings of the market place, within the range of choices indicated by the Plan's location proposals.

Within the new climate generated by apartment investment and the other measures recommended in the Plan, extensive rehabilitation and modernization of existing residential structures is proposed, with a target which would average 200 dwelling units per year. This is practicable for many sites along Beacon and Marlborough Streets and Commonwealth Avenue. The market anticipated is upper-middle and upper-income adult families. Based on past trends, there would not be significant numbers of families with children attracted to an area of this density, though such families would of course be welcome.

It is important that modernization and conversion be undertaken at the same high standard of quality and appearance as for new





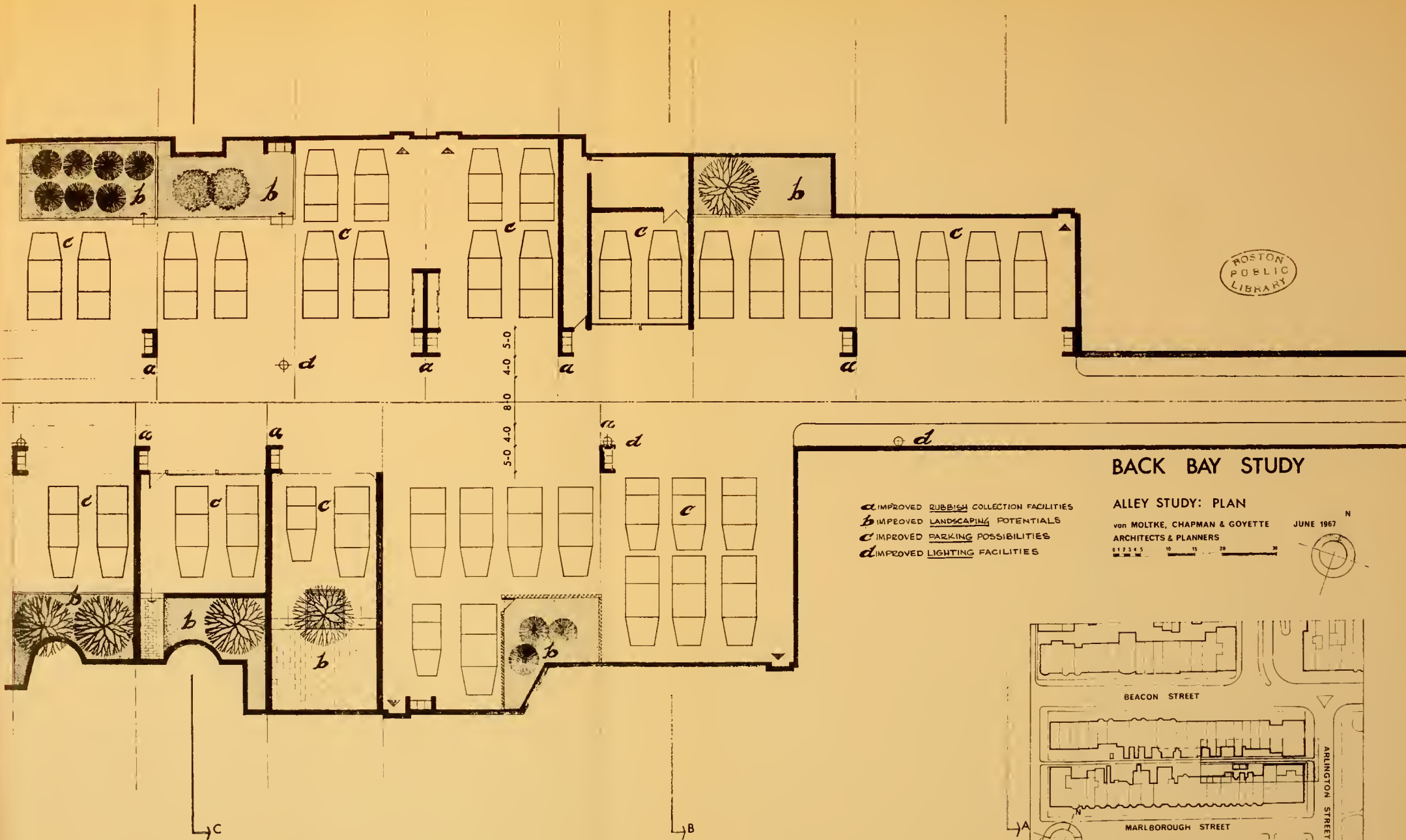
construction. It is less difficult (under reasonable controls) to preserve external harmony of appearance, but more difficult to assure good internal quality. There is, moreover, the problem of parking for converted structures.

In this connection an extensive program of alley upgrading is proposed, principally for the alleys behind the Marlborough Street frontage - the most likely location for extensive rehabilitation. The object is to improve both the appearance and the utility of the alleys. Pilot studies of the kind of improvement that could be initiated by joint action of the city and the property owners in a block are illustrated on the following page. One of the necessities to a clean-up is a new system of garbage and rubbish collection, with a uniform requirement imposed for neat and sanitary containers and container-shelters which should be the subject for further investigation through a demonstration program. Parking capacity could be increased in many instances by removal of frame sheds and tacky rear building additions. Back yard or back terrace outdoor usable spaces could be created also, with hardy landscaping and design for privacy.

By and large this residential area was found not to have a residential parking deficiency, off-street or on-street, except in certain locations and at peak hours. While a comprehensive







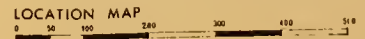
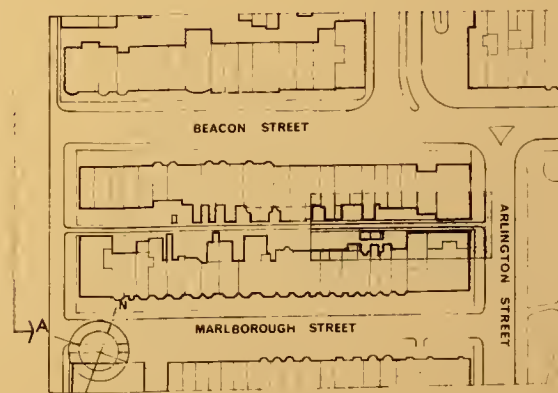
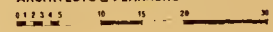
# BACK BAY STUDY

## ALLEY STUDY: PLAN

von MOLTKE, CHAPMAN & GOYETTE  
ARCHITECTS & PLANNERS

JUNE 1967

- a* IMPROVED RUBBISH COLLECTION FACILITIES
- b* IMPROVED LANDSCAPING POTENTIALS
- c* IMPROVED PARKING POSSIBILITIES
- d* IMPROVED LIGHTING FACILITIES





solution to the residential parking problem was not found, the adoption of a number of recommendations should reduce the problem. New buildings will presumably provide for their own requirements in interior garages, with any very high density towers having a parking ratio of one space per apartment. Non-residential parking intrusions can and should be minimized through the construction of additional parking garages in the nearby business areas and through police enforcement. Discouragement of further school expansion should also take some of the pressure off the need for more non-resident parking. There may nevertheless occur situations where additional off-street parking is necessary to serve the tenants of existing or converted residential buildings. The alley study described above suggests one approach to increase the parking supply by individual private action. Other ideas may be developed over time.

The general on-street parking congestion, especially in the intown end of the district, remains a problem - in part due to commuting students, and in part to a spillover of parkers from the Boylston-Newbury retail area. Some of the answer to this problem lies in an increase in parking supply within that retail area. The rest must lie in vigorous police enforcement of one- and two-hour metered parking during the day throughout the residential district.

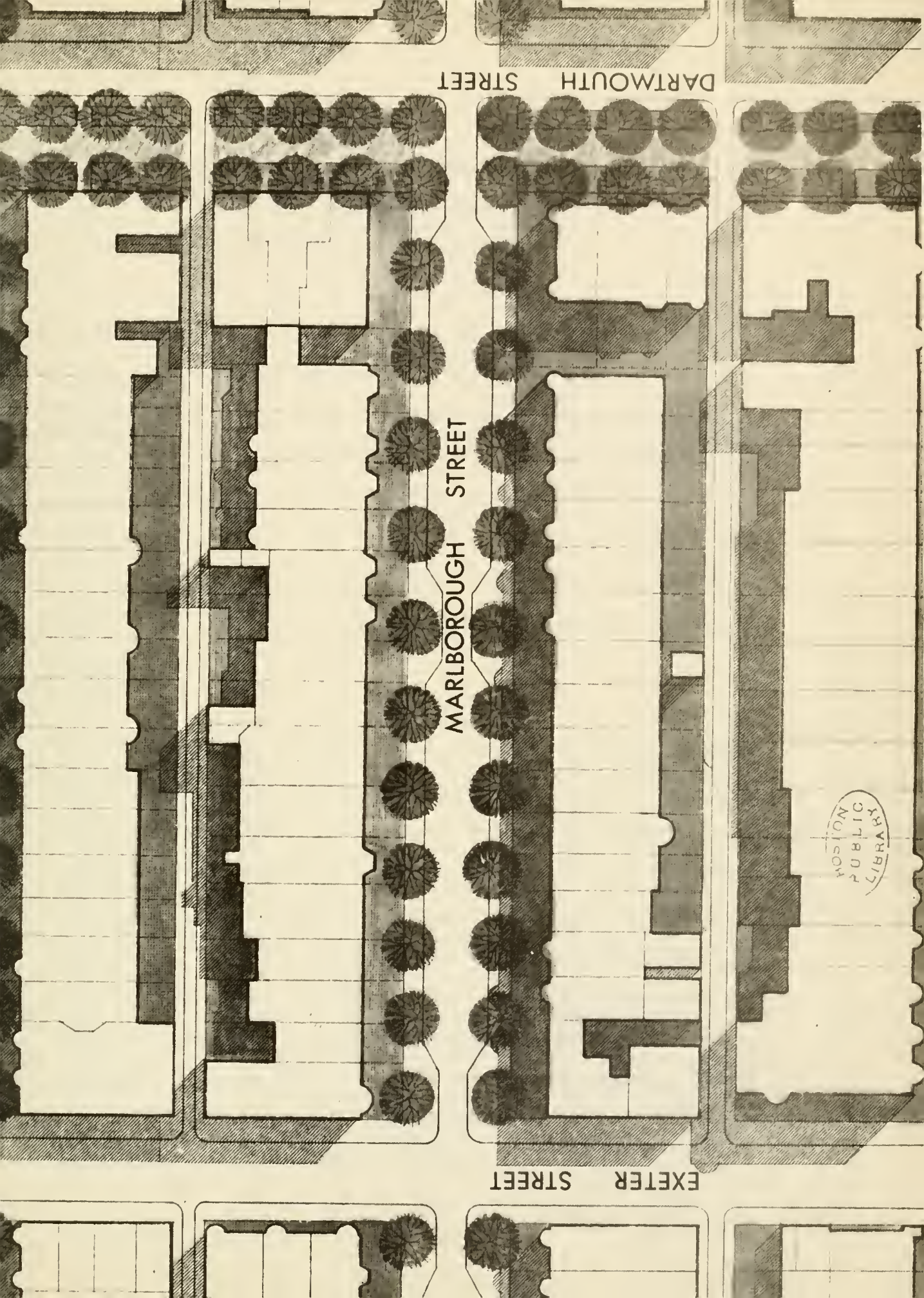


As a further measure to bring street-traffic conditions into harmony with residential requirements, it is proposed to discourage through traffic on Marlborough Street by flaring the sidewalks at the corners (see illustration following); this will not reduce actual capacity, but will serve as a psychological deterrent and will enhance the local-street character. Other measures of control to reduce the use of minor streets can be shown to be feasible.

The Plan proposes measures to reduce the negative impact of schools, colleges, and their related dormitories and rooming-houses. This is not a proposal that can be shown on a map. It involves rather the establishment of higher standards than now prevail for the internal occupancy and the operation of school and school-related facilities, especially those located in converted residential structures. In the future all educational uses should be zoned as "conditional," rather than as of right. One important element of such standards is to reduce the density of occupancy of dormitories and student-occupied rooming-houses to levels equivalent to what is currently being provided in new construction serving reputable colleges and universities - as detailed in the next chapter. This can have three beneficial effects: it can reduce the total number of student inhabitants of the Back Bay, cutting down on their night-time and week-end competition for space in the parks, sidewalks, streets and parking spaces; it can provide indoor







DARTMOUTH STREET

MARLBOROUGH STREET

EXETER STREET

YARVING  
PUBLIC  
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social and recreation areas, to reduce the tendency of resident students to spill out into the public areas of the Back Bay; and it can offer better living conditions for the students.

Another proposal is that schools and colleges in this area exert a greater control over their students in such matters as car ownership and use, and behavior outside of school houses and premises. This presents obvious problems in today's libertarian climate, especially when the students are over twenty-one. But it is not unreasonable to insist that the privilege of attending school in the Back Bay should be conditioned on standards of individual behavior not disruptive of the values of the permanent resident population.

In the face of the vary obvious pressures for expansion of the schools and colleges now located in this area, it is also proposed that the City of Boston - through the Redevelopment Authority - should provide positive help to those seeking such help in finding locations elsewhere, where their needs for space can be better satisfied. Potentials may exist in the Kenmore Square-Fenway area, and perhaps in other parts of the City. It is hoped that the schools individually, and then in organized group fashion, will establish their own needs and objectives and make requests which can be worked into feasible proposals, to be carried out by the schools with support from civic and public agencies.



For non-school types of institutions, the conversion of additional structures should not be discouraged provided this will preserve some major landmark buildings for which there is no reasonable taxpaying use. A number of these are mansions (especially on Commonwealth Avenue) which do not lend themselves to residential conversion, and are not necessarily attractive locations for new private construction. Two uses which would be especially welcomed would be foreign consulates and a permanent residence for the Mayor. These would not conflict with the quality sought for the area, and indeed would contribute prestige.

It is proposed that all development in the Commonwealth-Beacon area, whether private, civic, or public, and whether new construction or conversion, be held to very high standards of visual appearance and amenity, through the operation of the already-established Back Bay Architectural Commission. The unique urban-design qualities of this area constitute an economic asset second in value only to its convenience of location. This asset must be preserved. Guided by statutory procedures and by the design standards proposed in Report B (von Moltke; Chapman and Goyette), discretionary review of every exterior change by this highly-qualified board will apply throughout the area. The standards will be somewhat different for those blocks where the architecture is of specific historic value than for others. In every case the issue is not the artificial repetition



of antiquated design-details, nor the imposition of extra costs, but rather the assurance of visual and functional harmony in matters of bulk, scale, color, proportion, and design quality.

In complementing these efforts to ensure high standards of amenity in private development, the Plan proposes several public projects designed to improve the residential amenities and especially to make walking more attractive. The most important of these is the complete rebuilding of Copley Square into a really usable and beautiful urban formal park, the plans for which have already been approved. As the location of the key Back Bay public buildings and the anchor of the Dartmouth Mall, this is important to the residential sub-area though actually outside of it. Second is the tree-lined Dartmouth Street Mall, a visual and pedestrian link between Copley Square and the Charles River Esplanade (see illustration on following page). A broad and easy overpass from Beacon Street to the Esplanade is part of this concept, which at the other end may also be extended from Copley Square southward to the proposed transportation terminal. This Dartmouth Street Mall, next to the new Copley Square, is the single most-visible new feature of the entire ten-year Development Plan. It is conceived not as an expendable luxury, but as a central symbol of the "new" Back Bay and as evidence that the City of Boston will be a partner in the projected renaissance. In the years to come it is expected to become as much of an element in the popular image of the Back Bay as the Commonwealth Avenue Mall.







# KEY TO SITES OF MAJOR PROPOSALS

- A PEDESTRIAN OVERPASS AND OVERLOOK
- B BOYLSTON STREET PROMENADE
- C COMMONWEALTH AVENUE MALL
- D DARTMOUTH STREET MALL
- E PLAZA
- F REPLACE EXISTING STEPS WITH PEDESTRIAN RAMP
- G PEDESTRIAN PASSTHROUGH AND OVERPASS OF HUNTINGTON AVENUE

0 200 400 600 FEET



TOTAL STUDY AREA

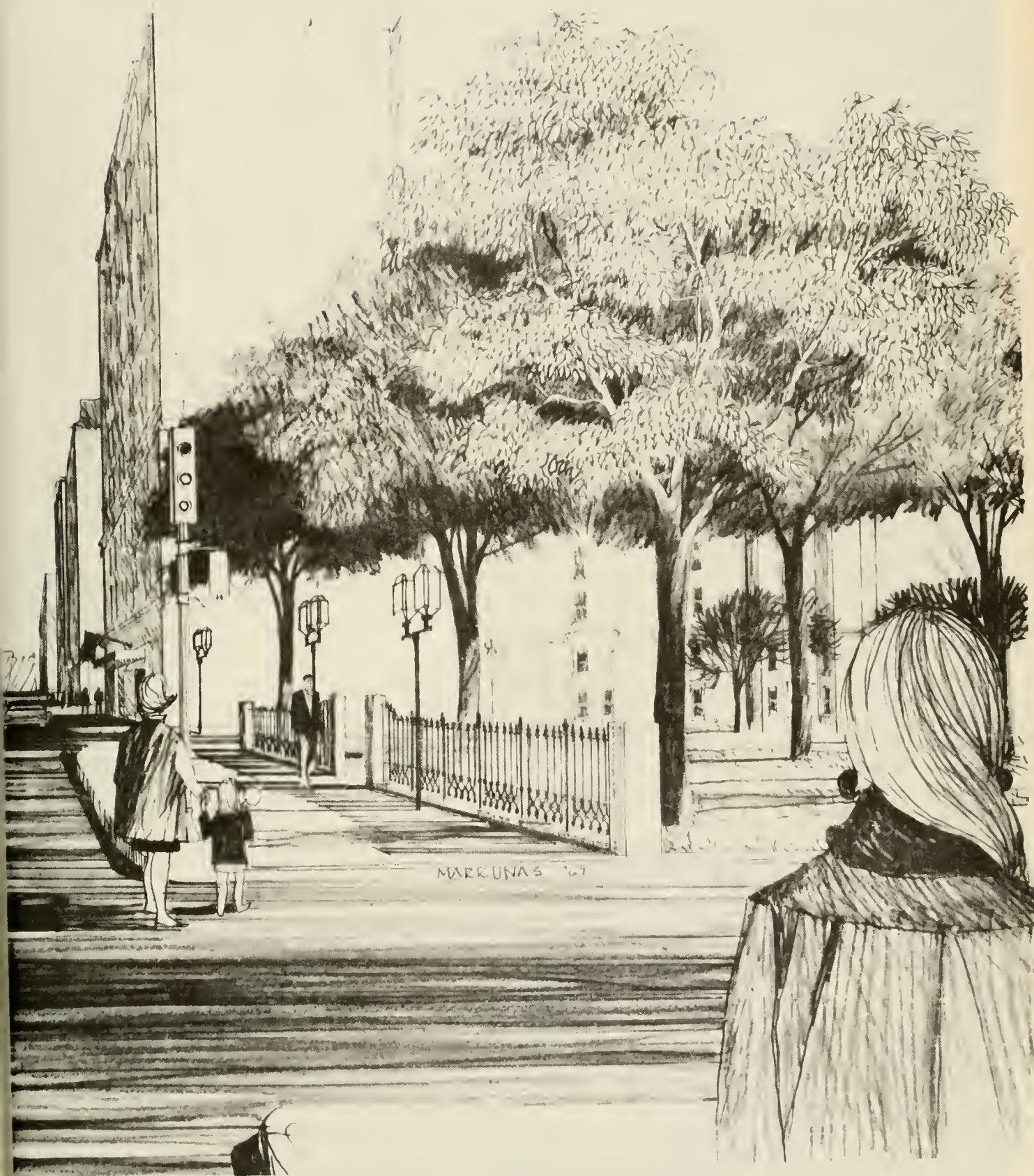
## BACK BAY STUDY LANDSCAPE PLAN

MASON AND FREY  
LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTS

20 JULY 57

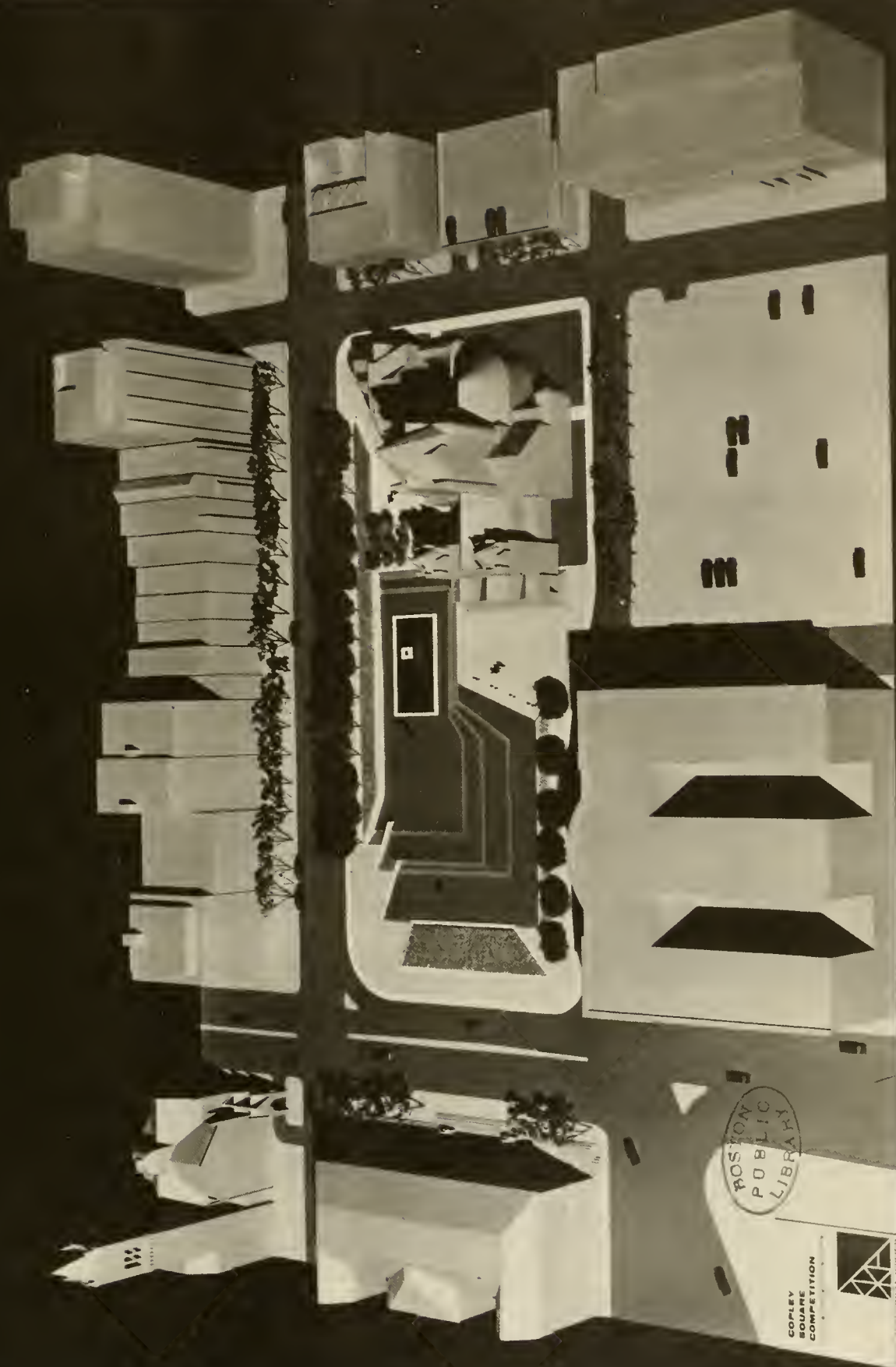












BOSTON  
PUBLIC  
LIBRARY

COPLEY  
SQUARE  
COMPETITION





Other contributions to visual amenity are also felt necessary to create a climate that will attract the projected level of private investment include a plan for the restoration of the landscaping of the Commonwealth Avenue Mall (see Report C, Mason & Frey); a general program of improved street lighting; and continued attention to street trees and the design and maintenance of street furniture.

These public and private developments, taken together, can re-establish the Commonwealth-Beacon area over the coming ten years as a high-quality residential district, serving a special element of the metropolitan housing market and fulfilling key objectives of the Development Plan.

#### 4. The St. Botolph Street Residential Area

For the St. Botolph Street residential area the Development Plan proposes a future consistent with the findings about its present. It is proposed for retention without major change, and a program of conservation and rehabilitation for middle-income occupancy. The economic undergirding for this will be the new frame for the area supplied by all new construction along Huntington Avenue through the Christian Science Church development.



When the Perkins School is abandoned, the site is proposed for publicly-assisted housing for the elderly, to aid in relocation from the Christian Science Church development. The design of such a project should provide, at ground level, some amenities of landscaping and a sitting area which could serve the vicinity as well as the elderly tenants.

If and when the institutional and commercial uses at the intown end of the area are abandoned, they should be replaced by higher-density middle-income housing, fitting in with the present character of occupancy and serving an important city need.

In general, this sub-area should be conserved for the use and benefit of its present kinds of inhabitants, as a viable neighborhood and as an essential middle-income housing resource.

##### 5. The Boylston-Newbury Commercial Area

The Boylston-Newbury area has assets unique in Boston. Newbury Street near the Public Garden offers a continental intimacy ideal for leisurely shopping, which has nurtured its attractive specialty shops; this architectural character extends westward and invites expansion. Boylston Street, with its wide sidewalks, offers opportunity for development of a mall-promenade of different character but of equal attractiveness for shopping. The potential for





retail growth to capitalize on these physical assets is enhanced by the area's location, linking the Public Garden and the Prudential Center, and its accessibility to suburban shoppers via improved and extended transit and expanded off-street parking. Market support will come not only from the new resident population nearby in the Commonwealth-Beacon area and the new apartments within Prudential Center, but also from the hotels and the workers in the vastly-expanded office-space in the vicinity. The prospects are exceedingly favorable.

The real estate market analysis conducted for the Boylston-Newbury area shows very great growth potential for the next decade. The specific forecasts include the following: an estimated 600,000 square feet of new office space to be built, plus the office expansion anticipated at Prudential Center; a projected 150,000 square feet of new residential construction; an estimated expansion in retail space, including 120,000 square feet of new construction, and 350,000 square feet of retail conversion or renovation, in addition to 250,000 square feet of additional retail construction at Prudential Center; also projected is at least one and probably two new hotels for the area. The reports also indicate both the need and the market for an additional 900 parking spaces in garages to be constructed (see Report F, James D. Landauer Assoc.)



The development proposals for the area call for considerable expansion of high-quality retailing activity, stabilizing the in-town established blocks and encouraging the westward spread of similar and related uses.

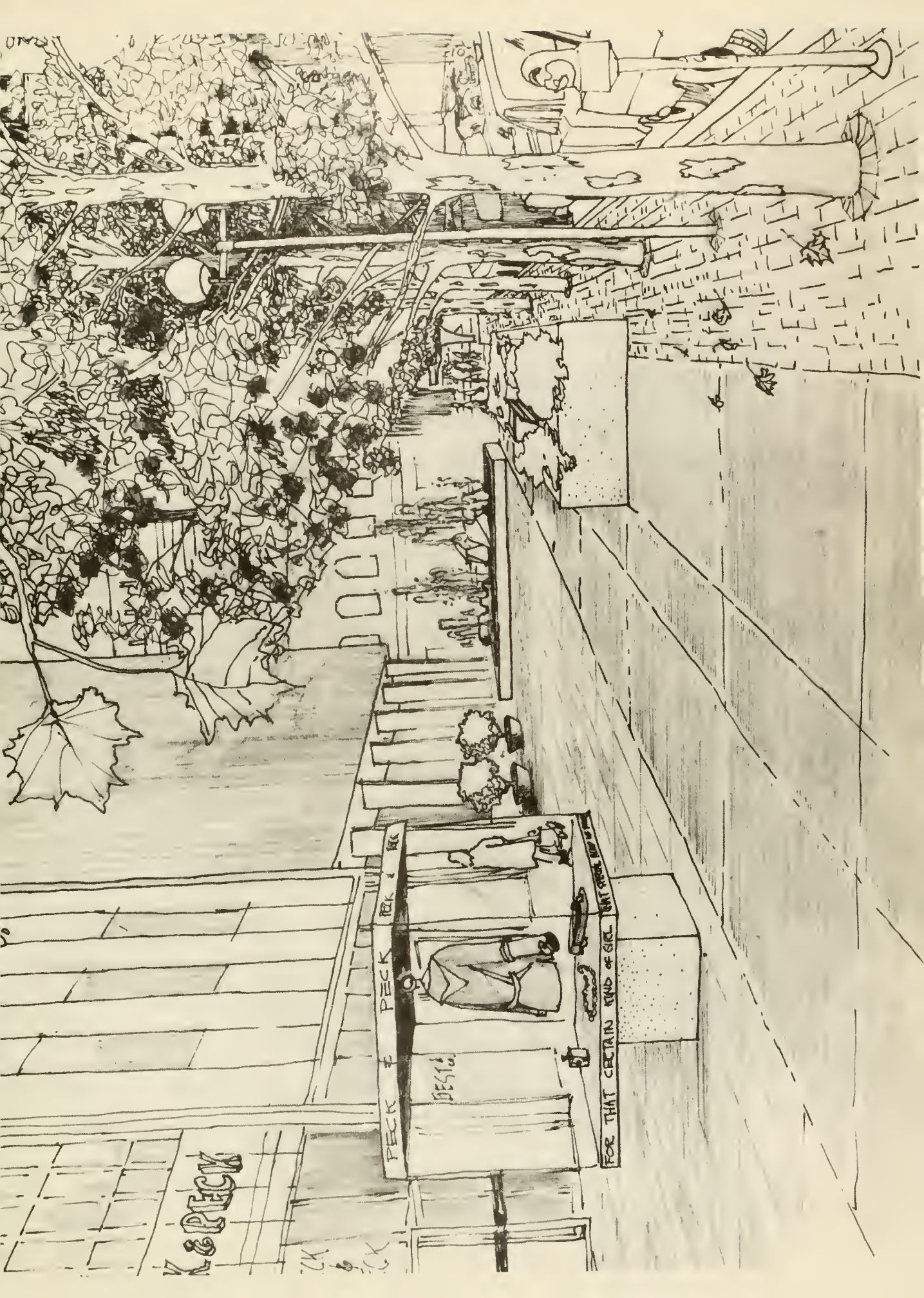
For the blocks nearest the Public Gardens the unique specialty-shop character should be retained. There is need for at least 800 additional off-street short-time parking spaces for customers. For the blocks fronting on Boylston Street between Arlington and Berkeley Streets, both north and south sides, there is real potential for replacement of old structures with new construction. In these two locations it would be physically possible to develop new buildings with retail floor-space at the street level and parking floors above. Upper floors could be added, for apartment use - with attractive views toward the Public Gardens - or office space.

It is not appropriate for this kind of plan to pinpoint private development projects. The Plan does, however, recommend that within these Boylston Street blocks, on one or both sides of the street, such redevelopment should take place for ground floor retail, for parking for about 800 cars, and for upper floor apartments or offices.

For upper (westerly) Newbury Street, west of the specialty-shop area, the plan proposes an extension of similar uses - art galleries,











design-oriented shops and professional offices, and the like - growing to link up with the Boston Architectural Center at Hereford Street. This growth can be accomplished by small-scale conversion of residential structures to commercial use, as has been so successfully done in lower Newbury Street. If the Prince School is abandoned for public school purposes, which would seem to be quite possible or even probable, the ground-floor level should be developed for commercial use, as should the Department of Education Building site across the street. Both should be of an occupancy and design which would retain continuity and encourage this westward extension. There should be serious consideration given to extending the Architectural Control district to include all of Newbury Street and Copley Square.

Additional off-street parking facilities in this area would be a further encouragement to commercial expansion, and might also serve at least some of the needs of the lower Newbury shops. There are several sites, especially the Exeter, Boylston, and Newbury Street corners, which could be developed for parking. This should be done in conjunction with retail use of the street level so as not to break continuity of facade and pedestrian movement. The building of combined retail and parking structures to contain at least 300 car-spaces is proposed for this general vicinity (see Report A, Barton-Aschman Assoc.).



For upper Boylston Street, from Copley Square to Massachusetts Avenue, the Plan proposes commercial development to be integrated both with what exists and is proposed within Prudential Center, and with lower Boylston. It is hoped that the presence of Lord & Taylor and the proposed Saks-Fifth Avenue will strengthen the attractiveness of these blocks for women's clothing and specialty shops. Prospects for this area should also be helped by the new 300-car garage proposed nearby at Exeter and Newbury Streets, and by the projected expansion of parking facilities within and adjoining Prudential Center.

At the Massachusetts Avenue end of Boylston Street is a sizable block extending to Hereford and Newbury Streets under B.R.A. control and ripe for redevelopment. The market prospects include a wide variety of re-uses that could be prosperous as well as fitting in with the general objectives of this Development Plan. There is already a need for additional hotel facilities which could be provided at this location. This block remains an invitation to an imaginative entrepreneur.

The Public Library is to be substantially expanded; this \$23,000,000 project is scheduled to start next year. Other institutional development which supports and which is compatible with commercial uses should also be encouraged west of Copley



Square, since it is recognized that retailing market prospects will diminish in strength in the westerly blocks.

It is recognized that good development of westerly Boylston, and indeed of lower Boylston also, will depend upon continuity and a strong connection between the magnets at one end of Prudential Center and those at the other, on lower Newbury near the Ritz-Carlton. One way of doing this would be a fast, frequent, low-fare shopper's shuttle bus, which has had success in Washington as the Minibus. This and other conveyances should certainly be explored and perhaps tried out.

There is another contribution to continuity, however, which is firmly proposed in this Plan. This is a complex of measures designed to make foot-travel all along the north side of Boylston Street more pleasant, more comfortable, and therefore more likely, all the way from Arlington Street to the westerly blocks. Even though the total distance from the Public Gardens to Massachusetts Avenue is a mile, the critical segments of the path needed to establish a viable link to Prudential would be much shorter - fifteen hundred feet between the Arlington-Clarendon group of blocks and Exeter Street. (Traffic studies show that a large majority of walk-trips from the Back Bay, for all trip-purposes, now exceed this distance.) What is important in this section is a psychological sense of linkage and inter-accessibility. This can



be achieved.

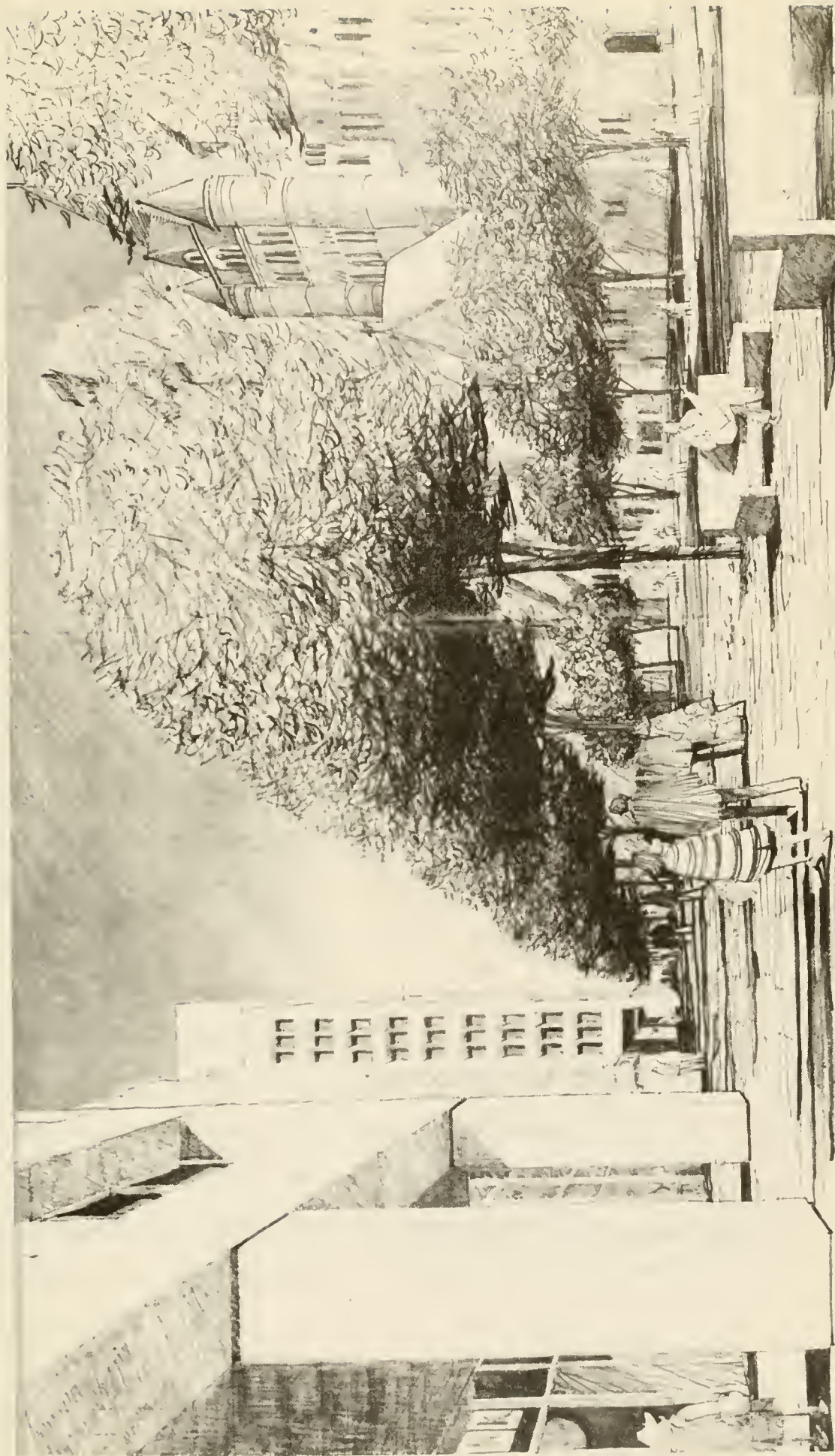
One proposed measure is the development, by reconstruction of old facades or by new building, of covered arcades along both sides of Boylston Street, especially along the north side past Copley Square (see illustration following). This would be accomplished by a zoning change requiring the sidewalk-level facade to be kept back at the present setback line, but permitting upper stories to project to the property line. Thus a bonus of additional upper-story rentable floor-space would be the return to the property owner for providing a new public convenience - and also for submitting to detailed design controls over the arcade itself, to assure its safety and attractiveness.

Related to the arcade, midblock walkways connecting the Boylston frontage to the Newbury Street shopping area should be developed wherever possible. The more the two streets can be linked, the more they will strengthen each other in economic terms.

Coupled with the arcade recommendation is a proposal for vigorous design controls (See Report B, von Moltke, Champman & Goyette). In a commercial district these could not be as strong, perhaps, as in the Commonwealth-Beacon residential area. They are projected to include height, bulk, setback, and landscaping requirements for both sides of the street, to assure a general uniformity of massing and scale. Also proposed is a vigorous program of sign







PERSPECTIVE OF b





control for all of Boylston Street, limiting the size, placement, and lighting of all signs and prohibiting billboards entirely (see Report B, von Moltke, Chapman and Goyette).

These kinds of measures, it is firmly believed, would so enhance the desirability of all parts of this key street as to be of direct and monetary benefit to all of the affected property. Together with the very great visual improvement of Copley Square itself, the resulting improvement in the appearance of the street and the shelter of the arcade would establish a new level of pedestrian amenity. The walk would be a pleasant experience in itself, as well as a way to go from point to point. This should achieve the sought-for tie between lower Boylston and the Prudential Center, and also attract investment in the linking blocks of the character and quality to integrate the entire area (see Report D, Mason & Frey).

#### 6. The Stuart-St. James Office Area

The Stuart-St. James area, already strongly committed to major office buildings, faces a future of great commercial growth amounting to a major transformation. The main prospect is for office expansion, with expectation also of hotel construction, a transportation center, and a design center. The three key development-sites





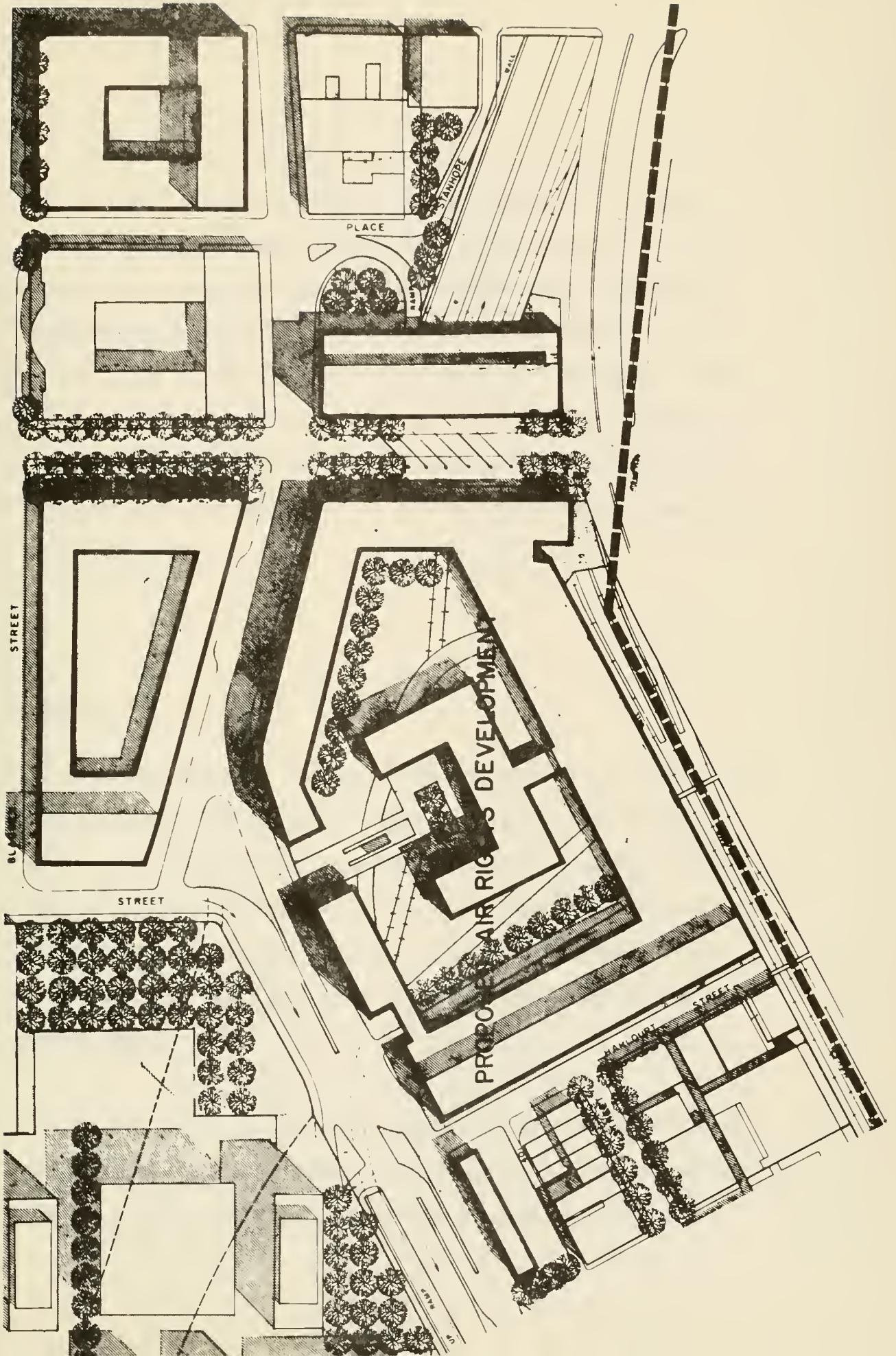
are the John Hancock properties, the site of the Greyhound Bus Terminal, and the air-rights site over the Turnpike west of Dartmouth Street (see illustration following) but there are a number of other development opportunities. The Plan anticipates development amounting to 3 million square feet.

To unlock this potential to the full, the area needs 1,500 parking spaces in addition to those provided as a part of new building development, and also the improvements in transit and highway access described in an earlier part of this chapter. It will benefit by the planned development of the residential and retail areas within the Back Bay, as described earlier; and also by new construction in the adjoining Park Square area, whose good growth prospects for offices, commerce, and apartments can be promoted by the Central Business District project of the B.R.A.

At present there is a shortage of all-day employee parking in the Stuart-St. James vicinity, and also of short-term customer parking for the adjoining lower Boylston Street retail blocks. New office buildings will be expected to incorporate parking facilities to meet the increased demand which they themselves will generate. But it is necessary to find sites for additional parking structures to correct the existing deficiencies.









A number of locations exist which could be physically developed for off-street parking structures (see illustration following). There is the site of the Greyhound Bus terminal, which should find a preferable location elsewhere; two locations with obsolescent structures on Columbus Avenue; and two sites at Dartmouth Street on both sides of the railroad and the Turnpike. This Plan strongly recommends that either the City of Boston or private enterprise should proceed to meet this parking deficiency. The excess of potential over the requirement should contribute to the feasibility of the operation.

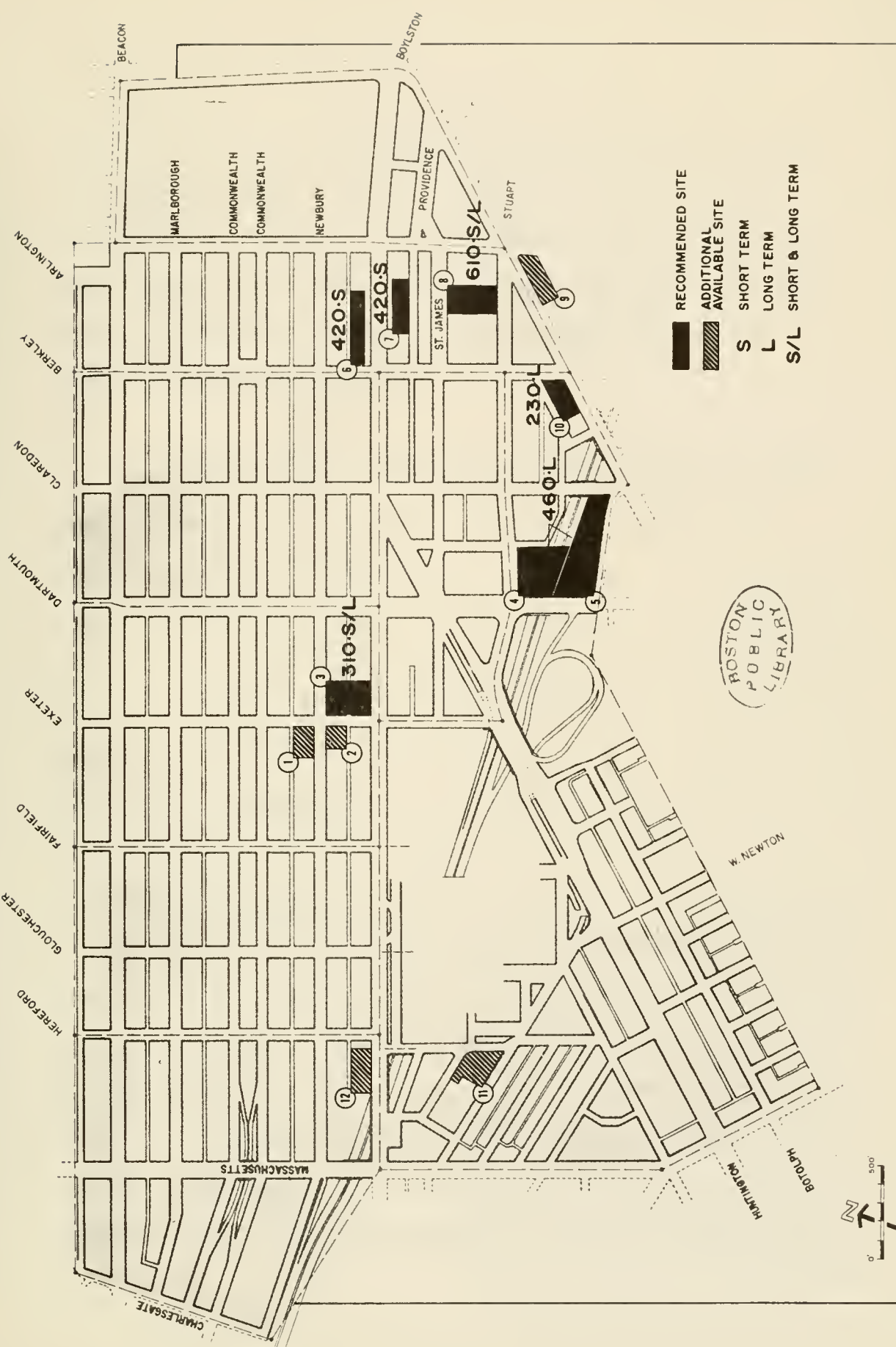
### SUMMARY

These proposals for the development of the various parts of the Back Bay within the coming ten years are seen as a practicable series of steps which can accomplish the goals and objectives of the area. The proposals are interrelated. They are addressed in part to governmental agencies, and in part to the private sector of the economy. Both must respond if the Development Plan is to be successful.

The private sector can respond only if a reasonable return upon the investment can be expected. Collaboration in the enterprise, among the variety of private interests involved, is clearly







- RECOMMENDED SITE
- ADDITIONAL AVAILABLE SITE
- S SHORT TERM
- L LONG TERM
- S/L SHORT & LONG TERM

# BACK BAY STUDY AREA      RECOMMENDED PARKING PROGRAM



necessary. But the overriding necessity is the full participation of the various public interests, primarily the City of Boston. Only government can provide the facilities and services essential to the success of the Plan, and can regulate and monitor the many independent individual operations, the sum total of which will constitute the future Back Bay.

Therefore the measures which must carry this Plan into reality devolve primarily upon government. They are set forth in the final chapter of this report.

### III FROM PLAN TO REALITY

#### 1. Private Investment

The great bulk of the changes which the Development Plan proposes during the course of the next ten years will result from private investments. The public investments provide the infrastructure; the public regulations provide the guidance and control; the civic groups provide the stimulus and initiative. But the Plan's success will stand or fall upon the capacity of these coordinated efforts to create a physical and fiscal climate which





will attract developers and investors.

The total of private and institutional investment will approximate \$325,000,000. This is based on the market prospects for a variety of economic activities, as enhanced by the recommendations in the Plan, projected to take place over the next ten years.

PRIVATE INVESTMENT FORECAST: 1967 - 1977

By District

Commonwealth-Beacon Area	\$ 30,000,000
Boylston-Newbury Area	28,000,000
Stuart-St. James Area	110,000,000
St. Botolph Area	2,000,000
Prudential Center Completion	50,000,000
Christian Science Church Development	85,000,000
Boylston-Park Square (east of Arlington)	20,000,000
<hr/>	
Total	\$325,000,000

By Type of Use

Apartments and Residence	- New	115,000,000
	- Rehabilitated	10,000,000
Offices	- New	95,000,000
	- Rehabilitated	3,000,000
Retail	- New	16,000,000
	- Rehabilitated	4,000,000
Hotels	- New	4,600,000
Parking and Other	- New	20,000,000
Air Rights Development	-	60,000,000
<hr/>		
Total (Rounded)		\$325,000,000



These sets of millions-of-dollars numbers have several implications. First, for the City of Boston: new real-property investments of these magnitudes will increase real estate tax income to the City by several million dollars each year. Furthermore, the development-types represented are by and large of the kind that do not generate increased governmental operating costs in anything like proportion to their tax payments. The residential investment with its corollary new population will probably not result in any increase at all in either school or welfare expenses, the two major demands upon the City's coffers; the new population is expected to include very few children, and to be in the middle and upper income groups. The retail and office investment is likewise free of concurrent school and welfare costs. The new tax revenue will amply cover the annual cost to the city of the public investments required to bring it into being, plus modest increases in the operation of such city services as fire and police protection, garbage and rubbish collection, and park and street maintenance; and will produce a clear surplus to aid in the financing of city facilities and services for other less fortunate parts and populations within Boston.

The second implication of the size of projected investments is that of a very important contribution to the general economic life of the city and the region. There will be not only more



millions in taxes, but multi-millions in payrolls, in retail sales, in rental income to commercial and residential investors. It is true that some of this new economic activity might have occurred elsewhere in Boston, or in the metropolitan area, rather than in the Back Bay under this Development Plan. It is also true that, without this coordinated program for efficient growth, it might have occurred in suburban locations, or in other cities - Worcester, Baltimore, Chicago, Dallas or Los Angeles, or perhaps not at all.

The final implication is the least direct, but perhaps the most important. These construction dollars, representing buildings, in turn are representing people - many thousands of them. Some will be working in the new office buildings, in a pleasant and accessible employment center. Others will be shopping in the expanded retail areas, engaged in a business activity, - though in an environment not only convenient but also unusually attractive, so that the shopping trip is itself a recreational experience; or engaged in cultural or educational activities within the institutions, with the double enrichment of the service of the institutions themselves and of the enjoyment of one of the world's great cityscapes. Yet other thousands will be living here, enjoying this unique urban area not just as visitors but as inhabitants.

This is the full meaning of the Development Plan for the Back





Bay: the renaissance of a great urban district in a great city, not only as a support to the tax structure of the city government and a strength to the regional economy, but also as an enrichment to the lives of people - those who work, shop, study and live here, and those who will come to visit from all parts of the region and the world.

## 2. Public Investment

The Development Plan contemplates a number of substantial investments in public works, to provide the network of public facilities and services necessary to support and encourage the fabric of private development. These are in general of two classes: transportation improvements to be undertaken primarily to serve the metropolitan community but of great importance to the Back Bay; and other public works within the confines of the district which are primarily for the benefit of the Back Bay itself.

The first class is the responsibility of state and metropolitan agencies, mainly the State Department of Public Works and the MBTA. The projects will be undertaken almost entirely outside the Back Bay, at costs and under time schedules determined by other influences than the recommendations of this Back Bay Plan. These projects - such as the Inner Belt, or MBTA extensions - accordingly are not detailed in this section (see Report A, Barton-Aschman Assoc.).



It is clearly to the Back Bay's advantage that all of them be undertaken promptly.

In a similar class are the major public investments in large-scale urban renewal projects in nearby and related parts of Boston, administered by the B.R.A.: the Central Business District, the South Cove, the Fenway and the South End. All of these projects will benefit the Back Bay.

The second class consists of projects most of which come within the scope of the City of Boston - Copley Square reconstruction, the Dartmouth Street Mall, the restoration of the Commonwealth Avenue Mall, street and sidewalk upgrading, landscaping, possibly new off-street parking; and of the MDC - the changes in Storrow Drive access and the new pedestrian overpass at Dartmouth Street. For these to have their greatest effect in attracting and stimulating private investment, they should be undertaken as early in the ten-year period as reasonable capital budgeting policies will allow. It is very strongly urged that the Dartmouth Street Mall be constructed immediately, as a highly visible token and promise of the renaissance of the Back Bay.

There follows a list of the major public projects, for which rough cost estimates have been made.



COST ESTIMATE OF SIGNIFICANT BACK BAY PUBLIC IMPROVEMENTS

Copley Square		
Design and construction	\$	550,000
Commonwealth Avenue Mall		
Lighting, paved seating areas, tree replacement, reseeding (9 blocks)		567,000
Dartmouth Street Mall (Boylston to Beacon St.)		
Resetting curb, street paving		
Mall paving, landscaping, lighting		300,000
Boylston Street Landscaping (Arlington to Fenway)		
Realigning curb, sidewalk paving, landscaping, pedestrian shelters		720,000
Pedestrian Overpasses		
Hereford at Storrow	\$	160,000
Dartmouth at Storrow		160,000
Huntington at Harcourt		160,000
Massachusetts Ave. at Storrow (ramp)		50,000
Charlesgate East at Storrow (ramp)		50,000
		<hr/> 580,000
Road Changes		
Storrow Drive ramps at:		
Clarendon and Arlington		185,000
Turnpike ramp at Stanhope Street		105,000
		<hr/> 290,000
Tree Replacement Program		
Est. 400 trees at \$100		40,000
Sidewalk Replacement Program		
Est. 4 blocks		110,000
		<hr/>
Total		\$3,157,000
		<hr/> <hr/>

1. The first part of the document discusses the importance of maintaining accurate records of all transactions and the role of the accounting department in ensuring the integrity of the financial data. It emphasizes the need for transparency and accountability in all financial reporting.

2. The second part of the document outlines the various methods used to collect and analyze financial data, including the use of spreadsheets, databases, and specialized accounting software. It also discusses the importance of regular audits and the role of external auditors in verifying the accuracy of the financial statements.

3. The third part of the document focuses on the presentation of financial data, including the preparation of financial statements and the use of charts and graphs to illustrate key trends and figures. It also discusses the importance of clear and concise communication in all financial reporting.

4. The fourth part of the document discusses the role of the accounting department in providing strategic advice to management, including the use of financial data to identify areas for improvement and the development of long-term financial plans. It also discusses the importance of staying up-to-date on the latest accounting standards and regulations.

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8. The eighth part of the document discusses the role of the accounting department in providing strategic advice to management, including the use of financial data to identify areas for improvement and the development of long-term financial plans. It also discusses the importance of staying up-to-date on the latest accounting standards and regulations.

In addition to capital investments, the Plan calls for other systematic public action to improve and maintain a high quality of public services. These will not necessarily involve increased expenditures. They are of three main types.

First is traffic control, beginning with the proposed revisions in one-way flow patterns, extending to signal revision and other control devices to facilitate traffic movement on the main streets and to discourage traffic on the minor streets and including vigorous enforcement of on-street parking regulations.

Second is a revised system of garbage and rubbish collection, involving new devices and requiring property-owner compliance with new rules - an essential to the proposed alley clean-up.

Third is a systematic upgrading of street lighting and other street furniture, accompanied by high standards of maintenance of street trees, landscaping, and other public facilities.

These capital and operating proposals for public facilities and services are seen as essential. Their symbolic importance has been stressed. They are of course valid in themselves, as contributors to the efficiency and amenity of the Back Bay. Furthermore, it is important that all of these kinds of things be carried forward.





They are mutually supportive, integral elements of a total system; the whole is greater than the sum of the parts.

### 3. Public Regulation

The Development Plan comprises a coordinated set of proposals for private investments of many kinds. For the fulfillment of these potentials, there is another essential arena of public responsibility over and above the provision of public facilities and services. This is the regulation of private development - the location of the different kinds of uses, the density of construction, the form and quality of design, the standards of maintenance and operation. It is perhaps a paradox that for the free market to work at its best, to the greatest benefit of the greatest number of individual investors, in a situation like that of the Back Bay the free market must accept the discipline of a quite extensive set of governmental controls. Those considered necessary to implement the Development Plan have already been suggested; they are more fully described below.

The city's zoning code is the basic control of the location and intensity of urban land uses. To a very large degree the pattern of districts and regulations now in effect in the Back Bay is consistent with the Development Plan's proposals. In general they should be retained, allocating as they do the various



sub-areas of the Back Bay to the land uses recommended by the Plan: in the Commonwealth-Beacon area, residence, with sharp limitations on expansion of educational institutions; in the St. Botolph area, residence; in the Boylston-Newbury and St. James-Stuart areas, commercial activities. Though the Plan distinguishes between the latter two, with retailing predominant in one and offices in the other, there seems to be no value nor need to devise separate use-districts through zoning. The present Business Zone permits both, and market forces can be relied upon to produce a mix consistent with the Plan.

An amendment to the regulations of great importance to the Commonwealth-Beacon area is the proposal to permit schools and other education-related uses not as of right, but only as conditional uses, subject to individual discretionary review by the Board of Appeals after public hearing.

Another important matter requiring a decision at the State level, which has been considered in the development of the Back Bay Plan, is the selection of a site for the Boston campus of the University of Massachusetts. It is understood that the present preference of University Authorities is for a site in the Copley Square area, involving the use of air rights over the Turnpike. However, it is the opinion of the B.R.A. and its consultants that such a location would conflict with the land use objectives of the Plan.



One minor change in use-district boundaries is recommended, to ~~protect~~ the residential character of the cross-streets between Newbury and Commonwealth west of Exeter Street. This would extend the H-5 (residential) zone south of the alley to include parcels that front on the cross-streets rather than on Newbury.

Another minor change, related more to density than to use, requires creation of a new district which would allow higher floor area ratios and building heights of 120 feet, to replace the L-2 zone now fronting on Massachusetts Avenue between Beacon and Commonwealth. The purpose would be to allow and encourage apartment towers, while still permitting street-level local service retail shops.

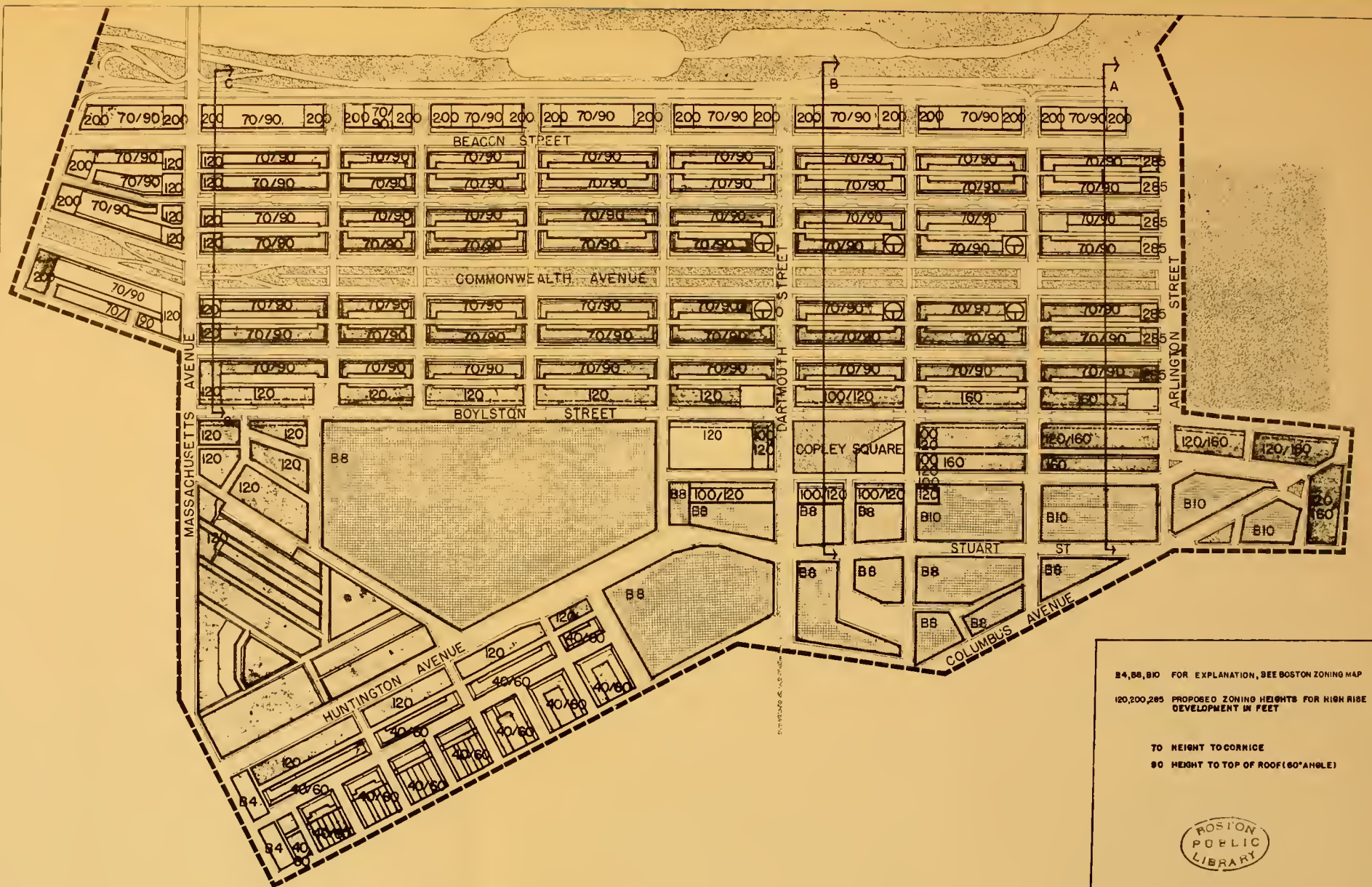
In the St. Botolph area, if the non-residential sites at the north-easterly end of the area become available for development it will be desirable to allow an increased density for proposed middle-income housing; H-3 or H-4 zoning would be appropriate, subject to new height limits.

It is proposed that very special sets of controls should be applied to the Commonwealth-Beacon area and to the Boylston-Newbury development. These may also require the invention of new zoning districts, to be mapped only in these locations.

For the Commonwealth-Beacon area, the proposed controls are summarized in the diagrams illustrated on the following pages. All street







B4, B8, B10 FOR EXPLANATION, SEE BOSTON ZONING MAP  
 120, 200, 285 PROPOSED ZONING HEIGHTS FOR HIGH RISE DEVELOPMENT IN FEET

70 HEIGHT TO CORNICE  
 90 HEIGHT TO TOP OF ROOF (60° ANGLE)



AREAS IN WHICH EXISTING ZONING WILL BE CONTINUED

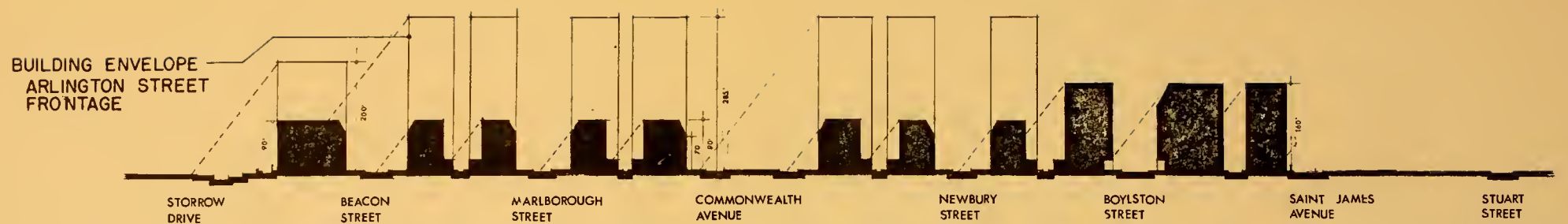
SITES APPROVED FOR 200' TOWERS BY PRIOR CITY ORDINANCE

# BACK BAY STUDY PROPOSED ZONING ENVELOPE SITE PLAN

VON MOLTKE, CHAPMAN & GOYETTE ARCHITECTS & PLANNERS  
 JUNE 1967



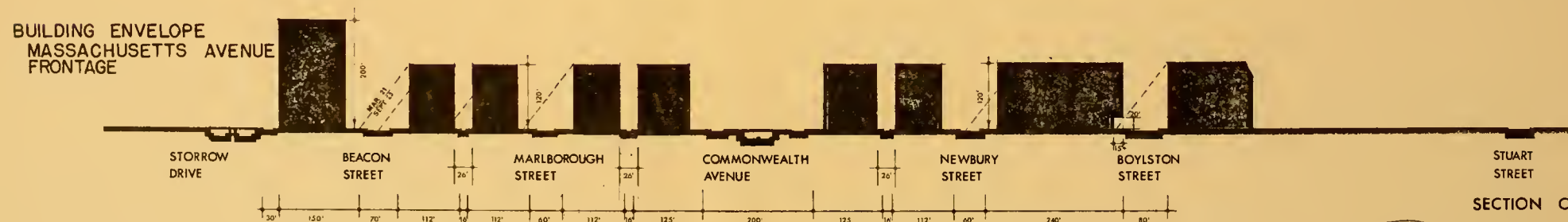




SECTION AA



SECTION BB



SECTION CC



## BACK BAY STUDY

### PROPOSED ZONING ENVELOPE SECTION - ELEVATION

von MOLTKE, CHAPMAN & GOYETTE  
ARCHITECTS & PLANNERS







frontages shall have human occupancy (rather than parking structures). Except for the high-rise locations, height at the building line is to be retained at 70 feet, with a 60 degree setback angle to a maximum height of 90 feet. For corner sites on the north side of Beacon Street and Charlesgate, the maximum height should be 200 feet. For high-rise locations on Arlington Street, 285 feet would be allowed. Massachusetts Avenue would be limited to 120 feet. Further details deal with front, side, and rear setbacks, at the ground level and above the 90 foot level, and other dimensional requirements; they are more fully set forth in Report E by John Bok.

With special reference to conversion and remodelling of existing residential buildings, a minimum average gross floor space per dwelling unit of 700 square feet is proposed, to prevent too many very small apartments and to help keep a balance between the number of units and the possible numbers of off-street parking spaces.

These objective and quantitative standards, however, are not considered sufficient to assure harmonious design and development. It is necessary to exercise discretionary review, by a highly qualified body acting under guidelines as to qualitative standards. This has already been assured through the establishment of the Back Bay Architectural Commission.



For Newbury Street, height controls are proposed to preserve the general character of the street and also to protect the residential area to the north from excessive wintertime shadows. Height is to be limited to 90 feet - 70 feet at the building line, with a 60-degree-angle setback, except for 285 feet on Arlington Street.

For Boylston Street, height limits are suggested in a similar pattern, with the 60-degree setback above a height of 120 feet required along the south side to preserve the access of sunlight to the lower levels of the north-side frontage. On the north side, maximum height would be 285 feet at the Arlington Street corner, 160 feet west to Clarendon, 100 feet around Copley Square (the cornice height of the Boston Public Library), with a maximum after setback of 120 feet; and 120 feet from Dartmouth Street to Massachusetts Avenue (see zoning diagrams earlier in report).

A key proposal for Boylston Street is the street-level arcade. Construction of upper floors is proposed to be allowed to the property line only if an arcade at the sidewalk is provided 16 feet high and 20 deep. The bonus feature is to exclude the additional upper-story floor space from the floor area ratio limitations.

Height limits are not proposed for the St. James-Stuart office area, except for a 100-foot limitation for buildings fronting on Copley Square.





Exceedingly important to the planned-for quality of visual appearance, however, is a vigorous set of sign and facade controls, which can probably be accomplished either by a separate ordinance or within the zoning code. This is especially necessary for the Boylston-Newbury retail area. It is proposed to tightly limit the size, location, lighting, and other features of all signs. (see Report B, von Moltke; Chapman and Goyette). The object, of course, is not to prevent competition for customers among the many different businesses, nor the identification of their activities, but rather to hold the amount of "visual noise" to a level consistent with amenity and pleasant character. Many high-quality retailing districts have increased rather than decreased their prosperity by accepting such controls; Upper Fifth Avenue is the classic example.

To administer these sign-controls, it is recommended that the Architectural Control District include Newbury Street. For Boylston Street and Copley Square, it is proposed to rely initially upon voluntary compliance; the need may later arise for a special ordinance.

In order to raise the interior standards of school-related residences in the Commonwealth-Beacon area, a special density regulation needs to be devised that probably cannot be incorporated effectively into the zoning code. In order to apply retro-actively to existing establishments, it might best become a part of the set of codes and ordinances governing licensing. It should apply to all dormitories



or other student residences owned or controlled by educational institutions, to fraternities and sororities, and to rooming-houses and other dwellings occupied by students. The regulation should recognize the relative inefficiency of converting old structures to student housing as against new construction.

The standards proposed are expressed in terms of gross floor area of the structure or dwelling per student housed, exclusive of floor-space used for other purposes such as housekeeper's or landlady's residence, but inclusive of social rooms, and of dining and kitchen space if dining is provided. The recommended figures were derived from analysis of current standard practice at schools and universities throughout the country:

	<u>With Dining</u>	<u>Without Dining</u>
In New Buildings	225 sq. ft.	200 sq. ft.
In Converted Buildings	275 sq. ft.	250 sq. ft.

The final feature of public regulation is a recommendation for vigorous and organized enforcement of the full panoply of codes and ordinances - fire, building, housing, plumbing, electrical, etc. - designed to protect health and safety. For the Commonwealth-Beacon area, it is recommended that the area be included in a Federally-aided Code Enforcement Project, through which Federal funds can be available not only for enforcement but also for certain local public works. If a Federal commitment cannot be obtained, there should be a combined and coordinated City code enforcement program. The same should be considered for the St. Botolph area.



The wide range of regulations described in this section is proposed not merely to protect the Back Bay from kinds or qualities of things contrary to the Plan, but actively to stimulate and promote the developments that are the main elements of the Plan's fulfillment. They are within the powers of the government of the City of Boston, and will require a commitment of legislative and administrative effort by the City if the goals and objectives of the General Development Plan are to be achieved.

#### 4. Civic Action

The role of civic groups is intermediate, between the governmental agencies and the private owner or investor. It may well be a crucial role. The origins of this Development Plan itself lie in civic-group initiative. The success of the Plan in reaching reality will require sustained effort throughout the ten-year period.

A most-important function is in the political arena. In our form of urban government, it is not derogatory to note that the public investments and public regulation measures outlined above are not likely to happen without constant citizen pressure.

There are also developmental roles which civic groups can play. An example is demonstration residential rehabilitation, for which Residential Back Bay, Inc., was formed. There are educational pro-





grams which the Back Bay Association could undertake - for instance, to acquaint merchants with the concepts of sign control and win their support for regulation. For signs and perhaps also for small-scale residential modernization, there could be professional architectural advice made available as a service. Civic groups could perhaps organize or recruit a redevelopment project sponsor, if no entrepreneur appears prepared to develop the renewal block between Hereford, Massachusetts Avenue, Boylston and Newbury in accordance with this Plan's recommendations.

The most fundamental role of the civic groups, however, is to create and sustain the Back Bay as a community with a climate and an atmosphere of quality and progress, which will attract new investment and new families and firms while retaining the present strong resources of economic activity and of residence. This is a function which the Back Bay civic groups have been performing with substantial success in recent years.

The Back Bay groups have been successful in establishing legal architectural control over much of the district. They have been persistent and effective in obtaining a series of zoning changes to improve land use and to turn back the forces of deterioration. They have launched major landscaping programs in the area, including the Copley Square area redesign and the Dartmouth Street Mall



as well as the plan for the restoration of Commonwealth Avenue.

The Back Bay Planning and Development Corporation and the Back Bay Council are both temporary organizations which are currently phasing out in favor of the Back Bay Federation for Community Development, a new amalgamation of community forces which is being established for the very purpose of implementing the Development Plan for the Back Bay. The new Federation includes the Back Bay Association, representing business firms in the Back Bay, and the Neighborhood Association of the Back Bay which represents the residents of the principal district.

The Back Bay is uniquely organized. With so many forces collaborating, the prospects are good for the accomplishment of planning objectives even though many are difficult and their execution may be some distance in time.

This Development Plan is, therefore, prepared for the submission to a community which has the necessary machinery for democratic review and effective approval, and which has the organizational resources to begin the implementation of such sound planning proposals which it chooses to adopt.



## CONCLUSION

The Development Plan for the Back Bay is a realizable vision. Its proposals carry the promise of major benefits to the present and future residents of the district, the institutional interests, and the retail and commercial communities. These benefits are equally clear for the City of Boston, and for the metropolitan area.

The Plan will not become a reality, however, without sustained and vigorous effort by all of the interests concerned. This initial operation of preparing the Plan is only a first step. There must be constant collaboration among the public, civic, and private agencies and firms. There will be elements of conflict; the participants must be prepared for compromise and conciliation, for adjustment of policies, for revision of proposals of the Plan when the inevitable unexpected events occur.

The mission of this Development Plan is to provide that overall vision, that long-range enlightenment to individual self-interest, which can serve to unite many separate efforts and enhance the success of each within the broader success of achieving a place of strength, prosperity, and beauty - the New Back Bay.















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